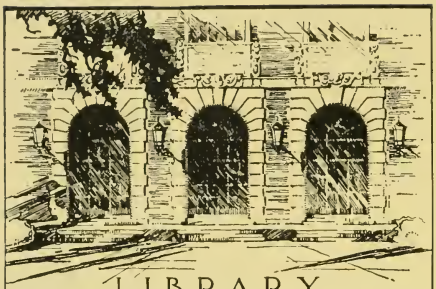

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WRECK AND RUIN:

OR,

MODERN SOCIETY.

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BY

KINAHAN CORNWALLIS,

AUTHOR OF

"A PANORAMA OF THE NEW WORLD"; "TWO JOURNEYS TO JAPAN";
"NEW EL DORADO"; "HOWARD PLUNKETT, OR, ADRIFT IN LIFE";
ETC., ETC.

"To know thyself, know all the world beside."

"The proper study of mankind is man."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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823
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v. 3

WRECK AND RUIN.

CHAPTER I.

The agitation consequent on the melancholy event just chronicled had subsided at Richmond Hall; weeks had hurried by, but Mr. Walpole still remained unusually grave, and apparently sorrowing. Nothing worthy of mention had taken place, more than his investment, under the advice of Phipps, of an additional five thousand pounds in the Bank of Swindledum. The first half-yearly payment of dividends now took place, at the rate of ten per

cent. per annum, and with a prosperous balance sheet. What could be more promising? Old Walpole bade fair under this skilful cooking to be the most tender bird of all the shareholders put together. He would see about making another transfer in the bank's favour; in the meantime, he was as unsuspicious as the rest of the victims, and as Phipps could desire.

Jane was gloomy, but, under the consoling influence of her cousin Osmond, sufficient light shone through the broken clouds of the past, to permit of an occasional show of cheerfulness; but she was by no means buoyant. Her lover's untimely death she looked upon herself as the indirect cause of bringing about. Ever since that fatal day, his image had haunted her imagination, and spectral and wan it still hovered about her. It broke her slumbers, disturbed her peace of mind, and

but too painfully alloyed the ordinary happiness of her existence.

Gentle in her pensiveness, there was a charm in her very sorrow which was fascinating, and which did not fail to produce its impression on the mind and feelings of the already enamoured Osmond. He had never told his love, although he had expressed his admiration; but it was evident even to the eye of an ordinary observer, as it had been to Mrs. Dawson, that their souls were sympathetic, and their chief tastes congenial, notwithstanding the first impression of his manner so unfavourably made on her; but all that had long been forgotten, and the cousins saw nothing to dislike in each other.

Osmond attributed the death of Gulliver to the hand of Providence, in order to rescue his fair cousin from an union with him.

"I'm sure you'd have been very unhappy," were his words. He had always been opposed to her contemplated marriage with him, and jealousy may have had something to do with that.

Weeks more wore on, however, during which time the cousin had confessed his love, and, moreover, obtained his uncle's consent to their marriage whenever they thought proper.

Never had Augustus Walpole sanctioned anything with so much heartiness, so much pleasure and satisfaction, as this alliance between two members of the house of Walpole — between these his guardian children.

The wish of his lifetime, the realization of which he had never hoped for until now, was about to be accomplished. He was glad. His path to the grave seemed to him decked with sunshine and with

blossom; after all the disappointments and vexations of life, he was at length rewarded. The house of Walpole would still be perpetuated, and generations to come would speak his name.

CHAPTER II.

The reader will remember the meeting of Major MacDuff and Madeline Walpole in front of the peasants' huts, near Crumblemud, on the morning following the ball.

Suspicions may exist that the Major had a stronger feeling towards her than the fact of his engagement with Miss Mortlake would have warranted. The reader will also remember the evident partiality shown by her towards Mr. Shackletrap, while the Major remained neglected; and how she so brought down upon herself her mother's

wrath, and, afterwards, her mother's body, on the unfortunate occasion when her angry pimple-nosed father pushed the one over the other, and both, in company with the chair, went toppling to the floor. Of course, dear reader, you remember all this. Well, then, under such knowledge is it to be thought unreasonable that Miss Louisa Mortlake should elope from the house of her father, at Crumblemud, with the said Mr. Hungerford Shackletrap, to the entire discomfiture of the said pimple-nosed father, and the hitherto apathetic wife of Mr. Shackletrap. No, not at all, quite reasonable. Beware! then, suspicious wives and angry fathers. Keep an eye to your husbands and your daughters, or you may be served likewise.

However, it was now too late to beware of anything. The fugitives were off and clear of restraint. No one knew

where to—all was wrath and confusion. All concerned were lost in uncertainty and surprise; the fugitives alone were the ones to laugh.

Oh! love and matrimony, ye are very tantalising; for no sooner had the pair taken flight than MacDuff delivered his declarations of everlasting attachment to Madeline, and—gracious goodness! only to think of it; what a very vulgar saying—she accepted him.

CHAPTER III.

Algernon Saltmarsh was another director of the Oriental Bank of Swindledum, in Wormwood Street. He was a man of capital; but, to use the confidential expression of Phipps, "a fool." Algernon Saltmarsh tenanted a noble mansion in Park Lane, where his wife and an only daughter lent a charm to his existence, which was now fastly on the wane, he being in his seventy-second year, but active, and just as wise as the rest of those who were contributing to uphold that gigantic

undertaking of that insignificant fellow Phipps, to wit, the said Oriental Bank of Swindledum, in Wormwood Street.

"If you wish to make an impression you must repeat a thing," was the advice of a certain old lady; therefore, we do repeat it, but hope, nevertheless, that no second Phipps will follow our example and repeat the great city swindle we chronicle—censure to the dupes, and perpetual incarceration to the "Directors," if it does recur.

"But lord, ma'am," quoth the rustic, "there's just such another concern, as regards rottenness and misapplication, only still more dexterously managed, within fifty yards of the Royal Exchange."

None will suspect it, however, till they see the doors closed, and the announcement of operations suspended ticketed thereon. Then the Royal British Bank will be re-enacted with a vengeance.

Six or twelve months comfortable location amongst such gay spirits as are to be found within the Queen's Prison will be looked forward to with very little dread by the peculators in the bank of our reference; while, as the world is wide, and fares are cheap, continental Europe may afford them charms; they may travel *incog.* with much comfort and safety to themselves; they may brush past a certain brother actor celebrated in the banking annals of Ireland; or, they may take steamer from Havre for New York, and reestablish themselves with their plunder in that glorious political constellation, the United States, where dwells another celebrated fellow actor, and ex-M.P., who was, perhaps, bolder in his plans than themselves; and who became such an adept in forgery, that at last he forged death itself by forcibly poisoning a man resembling himself; that deed was not done

unaided—he paid liberally for assistance. His hired confederate was Sylvanus Scamperwell, — the reader knows all about him. A furnished house was taken in St. John's Wood—the proposed personator of the M.P. and forger was thither decoyed—he was led unsuspectingly into the most secluded of the rooms—he was then seized by the two men—a sponge saturated with chloroform was thrust into his mouth; oil of bitter almonds poured down his throat completed the work.

It was now past midnight. Without, it was dark and windy. A million voices Æolian sped across Hampstead Heath. The man was stripped; a provided suit of the forger's clothes were substituted. He was taken through the back door of the house by the two men, who hurried on nearly a quarter of a mile, bearing with them the corpse. A slip of paper, with

the M.P.'s name on it, written by himself, together with a bottle of the poison used, and a silver cream jug, into which some had been poured, to complete the deception, was placed beside the dead man. The body was left in a natural position on a slightly rising ground.

Scamperwell received the last stipulated reward of his crime and returned to the house.

The fugitive forger hurried away, and taking the first cab he came to, drove to St. Catherine's Wharf, where he left by steamer for Hamburgh a few minutes afterwards, her advertised time of sailing being two A.M.

All the world believed he had committed suicide, and do so still. That very man is now a speculator in America.

Sylvanus Scamperwell still lives; but the knowledge and fear of the gallows is

likely to make him keep ever secret his complicity in the crime.

We have been diverging from the Royal Exchange. Let us repeat our warning to those shareholders and depositors concerned, and usher once more to the view Mr. Algernon Saltmarsh.

We have said that he had a daughter, and, to make our story short, we may as well say that to this daughter Mr. Montague Phipps made the profoundest love. The reader can imagine the rest. Phipps was married to her six weeks afterwards with the greatest imaginable pomp, at the church of St. George's, Hanover Square; on which occasion he experienced the pleasure of receiving a dowry of twenty thousand pounds. This, of course, was not much for a man like Phipps; but, nevertheless, it was a sum worth having.

Phipps, who had been previously nego-

ciating for the purchase of an estate in Essex, now concluded the same for the sum of twenty three thousand pounds, payment to extend over five years. Thus the wheel of fortune flew round, while Phipps spent the happiest of honeymoons in travelling through the highlands of Scotland, while Winterthorne attended daily, from eleven till four, at the bank in Wormwood Street, and borrowed as much as the bank exchequer would permit of, on the security of his note of hand; a very convenient state of affairs. The member for Ragland felt extremely obliged to his friend Phipps for putting him in the way of it; for Winterthorne was now so linked in with the concern that its original projector was completely in his power. There was no other course open to either of them but that of keeping up the joint system of plunder, and paying the ensuing dividend out of the principal in hand.

A little judicious cooking in submitting the next half-yearly report of the directors was alone required to keep up the prosperous appearance of the bank; after that, they could fling away for another half-year, and so on, as long as their consummate tact availed them. In the meantime, widowed and orphaned depositors and shareholders slept tranquilly, with their all, as they supposed, safely lodged in the Oriental Bank of Swindledum, which, presided over by so devout a Christian as Mr. Phipps, caused them to rest satisfied in the happy confidence of seeming safety and good dividends. So fanned by augmented prosperity, flourished the great creation of so small a man as Phipps.

CHAPTER IV.

All Crumblemud was taken still more by surprise, when, on the second day after the elopement of her husband, Mrs. Shackletrap followed his example—changed partners—and ran off with our friend, Mr. Ganges Shrimper, who had been a daily visitor at Richmond Hall, where she had been a resident guest for some weeks past, together with her husband, up to the time of his deserting her. It occurred two days before the one appointed for the union of the two sisters in holy matrimony with

Major MacDuff, of Ballymore, and Osmond Walpole, respectively. Every woman's tongue within five miles of the village was let loose upon the subject; and what with past elopements, and the forthcoming marriages, Richmond Hall and its inmates were in a high state of commotion.

Merrily pealed the bells on that joyful morning; gay and festive indeed looked the village and the villagers; all nature smiled beneath the beams of a sunny day. It was in the month of February, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, and the two nieces and the nephew of Augustus Walpole walked in bridal procession up the aisle of the village church. The cheers of the rustic multitude, and the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, had just subsided as the party entered the sacred precincts, the sombre gloom of whose interior contrasted heavily with the joyful exuberance of the

villagers. Again, the rustic greetings of the crowd were heard, ascending with greater enthusiasm than before.

The marriage ceremony was over. The Major took his seat beside Madeline, his bride. Osmond and Jane were similarly situated in another carriage; the rest of the carriages were soon occupied by a numerous party. The whips of the postilions were faintly cracked, and away dashed the horses, bearing their treasure of wealth and beauty back to the Hall, where a sumptuous *déjeuner* awaited them.

Augustus Walpole shed tears of joy as he pledged the health of the young cousin couple. He felt that his best wish was accomplished, and never had he parted with anything so cheerfully as the thirty thousand pounds which he had divided, as the wedding portions of the two girls.

The newly married pairs again were

driven away, and while Crumblemud was feasting, arches of virgin plucked flowers, with here and there a device, overhung the road they passed along; and as the special train started, which was to convey them to Southampton, from which Osmond and his bride had arranged to take steamer for Ryde, the genuine cheers that again rent the air were enviable indeed. Rapidly receded the train from the gaze of the multitude collected to witness its departure. The matrimonial career was joyfully entered upon; all looked auspicious; no cloud sullied the horizon of their hopes. Were they not truly happy? Was there not a heaven for them on earth? Wealth, and love, and beauty, without a care to furrow the equality of their way, combined in their behalf. Such transport had never before been witnessed within and around Richmond Hall, as the light of this day had shone upon.

CHAPTER V.

It was five hours after the departure by railway of those just mentioned. The shades of night were fastly blackening around. Scarce a ray of light broke through the western horizon, and the sky, which had before looked threatening, now poured down its endless tears upon the earth. A messenger, with a telegraphic dispatch, came galloping up to Richmond Hall.

"An accident! an accident!" the words sped like wildfire through the house.

"Collision—the Major dangerously hurt—Jane wounded—the others uninjured"; such were the hurried articulations of Mr. Walpole, as in nervous agitation he read the telegram. His words were repeated almost simultaneously one after one by the whole astounded assembly, who were instantly grief-stricken. They tried to make the best of it, as people will do, under such circumstances.

"Elmsdale station — where are they now?" asked Mr. Walpole eagerly, and in a convulsion of anxious sorrow and excitement.

"Don't know, sir; we 'xpect 'nother telegraph soon; p'rhaps 'thing's not's bad as't seems. Em'ty waggons was s'threwt the train off"; replied the man quickly and sympathisingly, holding his cap in hand.

"Get the carriage ready—saddle the horses—bring—go—" spoke the afflicted

Squire of Richmond Hall, in half a frenzy of grief, at the same time dancing about in disorder, as if bereft of his senses, or just on the point of so being.

At this crisis, our friend Phipps, who was a guest on the occasion, stepped forward, and endeavoured to calm his troubled spirit, and offer him consolation. But no; he was too much excited to be acted upon by words. In a few minutes, he, together with a troop of those friends around him, and a few domestics laden with medicines, bandages, and a multiplicity of comforts for the wounded, were borne rapidly away towards the railway station, which lay at the distance of about three miles, leaving behind them, at the hall, a disconsolate wreck of troubled bridesmaids, together with the wife of Phipps, and a few venerable parents to mourn the disaster.

CHAPTER VI.

It was impossible to procure a special train that night; but the 9·30 down mail would take them to the station two miles on the Crumblemud side of the scene of disaster. For this Mr. Walpole resolved to wait. In the meantime, he kept up a perpetual telegraph, save when an incoming message from the station communicated with had to be read. No definite information, however, was received till within half an hour of the time appointed for the arrival of the down train, when the wires informed

him that the wounded special train party had arrived at Elmsdale, in vehicles, dispatched for them by the railway company. The down train arrived; those from the Hall at once took their seats in it, and were carried quickly away.

On their arrival at Elmsdale, the appointed station, they were conducted without delay to the only hotel of the place, and where lay the sufferers. There they found the village apothecary in attendance on the unconscious Major and the mangled Jane.

"Oh! dearest uncle, my husband's life is despaired of," spake Madeline, as Mr. Walpole entered; and she sobbed and clung to him in a very frenzy of grief. "Jane is not much better, and oh! poor Osmond! Oh! what shall I do? oh!" and she yearned and sobbed again, while the bitter tears of mental agony coursed down her pallid features, and fell, jewel-like, from her liquid eyes.

As for Osmond, he was less excited than any of the others—his soul was laid prostrate by the blow. He knelt by her bedside and would not leave it. Sore stricken indeed was he. His was a brooding agony; a pang that convulsed unseen; a canker that gnawed in silence; and an affliction at once too severe and too terrible to be told. Both sufferers were in too dangerous a condition for removal. Every medical man in the neighbourhood was sent for. Two had been brought down from Crumblemud, and Phipps still considered himself no mean adept in surgery, although his attention had of late been so entirely abstracted by the financial concern in Wormwood Street.

Who would not have pitied the fate of that husband and that wife?—of Osmond Walpole and Madeline MacDuff, on this the first night of their married life.

A consultation of the five surgeons in

attendance was held at a little past midnight to deliberate upon the condition and treatment of the Major, who, in addition to other injuries, had received a compound fracture of the skull. It was a time of fearful suspense for Madeline, and the party from the Hall could not fail to participate in it.

We will not enter too deeply into the painful detail of the case; but chronicle the fact that at a few minutes past two on that black and rainy morning, and nine hours after the accident, the body of the unconscious Major Rathangan MacDuff ceased to be animated by the breath of life. An additional gloom overspread the whole party on hearing this; while, as for Madeline, she sank into a deep swoon and remained insensible for hours, save during those moments of consciousness when faint succeeded on faint in prolonged succession.

The intelligence was preserved secret from Jane, upon whom, from her enfeebled and critical condition, it might have acted with ill effect.

Sad tidings, dear reader, very sad.

CHAPTER VII.

It was not until the seventh day after the railway accident, during which time a coroner's jury had returned a verdict of "death through injuries sustained by a railway accident;" and the corpse had been removed to Richmond Hall, and from thence interred in the vaults of Crumblemud Church; it was not until then, we say, that the condition of Jane, now Mrs. Walpole, permitted of her removal from Elmsdale. They were compelled to travel by railway, the distance being too great and the country

too uninviting, for travelling by coach; but Mr. Walpole vowed, as he took his seat in one of the carriages, that it was the last time either he, or, if he could prevent it, anyone belonging to him should journey by it. He would have it shut up for that matter.

The jury had censured the negligence of the company in allowing the empty waggons to be run on that line on which they had provided a special train to travel, and with that at his back, he would make parliament shut it up,—yes, "shut it up altogether," were his words.

No sooner had the train started, than Jane manifested a sudden timidity and nervousness, and before they had proceeded half a mile fainted unconsciously away, while the engine went sporting boundingly along, and Mr. Walpole tried, but in vain, to stop it by shouting, in his loudest key, to the

guard behind and the engine-driver in front, neither of which personages, however, were to be seen.

While we speak of this, let us remind railway companies and the public of the necessity of establishing some system of communication between passengers and engine-driver on a running train. It was but a brief period back that fire, originated by wheel friction, nearly consumed one of the carriages and roasted its helpless inmates while travelling over the Great Western Railway, near London, and many such cases are chronicled in the railway annals of our country.

Let "directors" rest assured that the adoption of such an invention would not be abused. Should they refuse, let the public insist upon some such means of communication; and let them at the same time take up the subject of carriage lights, and not

allow the night passenger to sit in such tantalizing gloom as now pervades those huge boxes that are to be seen flying across the darkened landscape behind that panting fire horse, the locomotive. Nobody can read in them with comfort, whether they stand or sit. "Very bad for the eyes—worse for the book trade"—is the expressed opinion: then why have it? The farthing candle day has expired. We look for light as well as enlightenment in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, and there is no reason why we should submit to go without it.

The train stopped once on its way to Crumblemud, but Jane had then so far recovered that it was thought to be more judicious to travel the remainder of the journey without alighting, there being no hotel at this the station alluded to.

The poor girl arrived at the Hall. She had to be carried upstairs, so enfeebled was

she. Her very ghastliness was shocking. She expressed regret at having undertaken the journey. On the day afterwards erysipelas set in—the doctors tried all they could to stay it; but no, the hand of death, invincible and resolute, was upon her. She lingered painfully away, and on the second day after her arrival sank to a peaceful slumber.

A wild shriek of agony broke the sanctity of her chamber as her spirit ascended to heaven; it was the voice of Osmond. He beheld his bride a corpse; and in very madness flung himself insensibly upon her body—that body which he had lingered over for eight weary days and eight weary and anxious nights! She was dead—how bitter to him the thought.

Osmond Walpole awoke from the fit into which he had fallen, A MANIAC.

CHAPTER VIII.

Three months after the melancholy event last chronicled, a "run" set in quite unexpectedly upon the Oriental Bank of Swindledum, in Wormwood Street, City, which created great consternation amongst the directors in general, and Messrs. Phipps and Winterthorne in particular. Some evil reports, emanating from a discharged clerk, had gone abroad, and shareholders, with open eyes, stood upon their guard. The Managing Directors, *i.e.* the two gentlemen last mentioned, endeavoured, in the

first instance, to quiet these suspicions and reassure depositors as to the safety of the bank, which they stated never to have been in a more flourishing condition. A small paragraph in the money article of a daily paper, which appeared two days afterwards, however, completely upset their hopes of restoring confidenee.

The article in question reflected on the management, and hinted at jobbing, and the result was, that as soon as the bank doors opened, a crowd rushed in.

"It's all up, Phipps!" said Winterthorne, rushing into the bank parlour at eleven o'clock. "Close the doors!"

A moment's consultation and deliberation settled the point. Winterthorne pulled the bell for the porter.

"Close the bank doors this moment!" said he.

The porter staggered back in amazement.

"Quick, sir!" commanded the director, and the order was as promptly executed.

"Show that boy with the check outside," he called to the bank messenger: it was done.

Two or three men, with yellowish printed paper, rushed up as the door was banged and bolted; but they were left outside to indulge in a little private wonder.

"Porter, wafer this notice on the bank door," said Winterthorne, three-quarters of a minute afterwards. The document in question ran thus:—

This Bank is closed, pending negociations and a general meeting of proprietors.

MONTAGU PHIPPS,
C. L. DE B. WINTERTHORNE,
Managing Directors.

"This is early closing with a vengeance," remarked one of the disappointed cheque holders, waggishly, as the notice was being

posted up, for the edification of the public in general, and future cheque holders in particular.

A crowd soon gathered round the bank doors, and after trying in vain to pull sound out of the muffled bell, assailed the door with their boots, sticks, and umbrellas; but still there was no response.

Such was the scene outside the great Oriental Bank of Swindledum, in Wormwood Street, on the memorable day which made so many acquainted with their ruin.

"What cash is there in the house?" asked Phipps of the chief teller.

"Eight, eight, seventy," was the quick return.

"I may as well draw half of that for contingencies," said Phipps, when the cashier had retired; "the rest may remain."

"And, in that case, Mr. Phipps, what am I to do?" asked his co-director, indignantly;

"I want just as much as you do. I was not born exactly to be cut off with a shilling," he continued, half facetiously; but in a tone at once firm, bitter, and menacing, such as became a man so daring and of such worldly experience as the quasi bushranger of the antipodean wilderness. "If you like to go halves—four thousand each—I'm willing; but it's preposterous to think of my quitting the concern with empty pockets."

Phipps quailed for the consequences of leaving the bank coffers empty; but in Winterthorne he knew his man. It would be utterly useless reasoning with him, and, as in case of his, Phipps's, noncompliance, Winterthorne could sign a veto against the withdrawal of the proposed four thousand, he thought it better, rather than forego so comfortable a retiring fee, to accede to the demand. Accordingly, they each drew a

cheque for four thousand pounds, and pocketed the money; and so the proceedings of the great Wormwood Street swindle closed, and a balance was at once struck.

CHAPTER IX.

On the morning following the closing of the bank, numerous creditors presented themselves and their accounts for payment at the respective mansions of Montagu Phipps, Esq., and Charles Lucien De Burgh Winterthorne, Esq.

"My master's engaged," was the answer which most of them received at the house of the former.

With the claimants against the member for Ragland, the proceeding adopted was different; the principal ones he held per-

sonal interview with, while the tradesmen, always the most troublesome, were confronted by Mrs. Winterthorne, the bride of Nottingham. They were each assured of certain payment, and took their leave comparatively satisfied, but still without any greater security of ever having their claims liquidated.

In the course of the morning, Phipps called, accompanied by Mr. Algernon Saltmarsh, who was sore troubled about the catastrophe in Wormwood Street.

Winterthorne joined them in the carriage of Phipps, and the three were driven down to Wormwood Street together.

"The article in the *Morning Post* is very bad;" observed Saltmarsh.

"There's a paragraph in the *Times*, and a notice in the money article, that won't do us much good," said Winterthorne rather anxiously.

"A little more capital, however—a loan—would carry us over the difficulty. In the present state of the money market, the mere suspension cannot be of permanent injury to us," remarked Phipps, in order to give the stoppage a more honest and less fatal appearance.

"The old deceiver!" ejaculated the member for Ragland within himself.

One or two shareholders hailed them with their umbrellas, as they passed along the Strand; those of the carriage occupants that knew them nodded, and both directors and shareholders continued on their way to the collapsed bubble in Wormwood Street. If any one wants to know where Wormwood Street is, let him ask where the great bubble of the Oriental Bank of Swindledum burst.

When the directors arrived in front of the closed doors, a scanty crowd darted

the most savage and menacing looks at them. The head of one of the porters bobbed up before the fanlight window, as the carriage drove up, and the private door of the establishment was at once opened. The other dupes of directors were already assembled in the board-room—men who had been ignorant of the real state of the bank funds, till the announcement of its suspension met their eyes in the columns of a newspaper.

They knew nothing of the four thousand pounds each drawn by the two managing directors on the previous day, but they were nevertheless sufficiently incensed to cast the most withering looks of dissatisfaction and indignation at the head of senior director Phipps, as he made his appearance before them, and prefaced his introduction of the bank's affairs by saying,

"Gentlemen—ah—hem—hem" (a very

raspy throat had Phipps this morning) "taking into consideration the interests, permanent and otherwise, of this bank, I, in conjunction with my brother director, Winterthorne, deemed it advisable, on yesterday, to—ah hem—close the doors—the run upon the bank having unfortunately again set in, and the bank funds being reduced so low—hem—hem—as to render continued operations impossible till after a meeting of the body of proprietors, to resolve upon the proceedings requisite for future adoption, and also to consider of the advisability of negociating a—hem—loan."

Loud murmurs of dissent, and an indignant cry of "Where's the money?"

"Gentlemen—brother directors"—resumed Phipps, "it is unnecessary for me to impress upon you the necessity of considering with calm and dispassionate deliberation

of the course to be adopted, and I trust that any exhibitions of feeling calculated to injure and undermine the best interests of the bank, may be at once suppressed."

"Hear, hear," from Phipps's father-in-law; which was repeated by all but the man who asked where the money was.

"Gentlemen, I beg to propose that a general meeting of the shareholders in this bank be summoned for Thursday next, by which time I shall have been enabled to prepare and submit a statement of the exact condition, assets and liabilities of this bank, when I trust some plan may be at once agreed upon for its resumption of business."

"Hear, hear," from everyone, especially from the man who had asked where the money was. He was in favour of everything being made public, and would almost have preferred "an exposure," as he termed it, to having his money returned.

The director's fees were paid this day out of the balance of the eight hundred and seventy left to the credit of the establishment, and this timely feeding, small as it was, strange to say, acted as a capital set-off till the following Thursday.

That evening Winterthorne put all his unportable worldly estate into the hands of a certain west-end auctioneer, with the strictest injunctions for the preservation of secrecy. The shops in Baker Street and Piccadilly were to be sold, stock and good-will included, for cash only. Not having paid for Balderdash Hall, Ragland, or the furniture therein contained, nothing could be done in the way of selling that; but the furniture at the mansion in town could go—it must be the last, however. Such were the instructions given by the co-director of Phipps. In the meantime his only object was to gain time and collect his revenues.

CHAPTER X.

The meeting of proprietors on the appointed Thursday was a very angry one indeed.

Phipps found it impossible to screen the fact of both himself and Winterthorne being largely indebted to the bank. His only aim now was to make it appear that the securities lodged were amply sufficient for the loans advanced; but it was rather difficult he found to convey that impression satisfactorily. He could not, of course, prove such to be the case; therefore, no al-

ternative remained but to brave the wrath of the ruined shareholders, with whom he stood face to face.

Augustus Walpole was there, shedding tears, and Ganges Shrimper, now returned from his fugitive excursion with the wife of Shackletrap, was there also, looking exceedingly grim and wild on the Oriental subject.

The meeting finally resulted in an adjournment for additional reports till the ensuing Monday, and everybody quitted the bank in despair, and walked down Wormwood Street with the saddest of looks. Ganges was particularly downcast and disappointed; he could have committed suicide just then without the slightest feeling of compunction. In fact, it was the very remark he made to a friend whom he met and walked on with down Ludgate Hill.

"Here," said he, "I've invested twenty-seven thousand pounds in that (we leave out a word) bank, and there's not a shilling left in it to pay anybody with."

"You don't say so!" said his companion, with a look of wonder directed straight at the eyes of Ganges.

"Yes! but I do indeed. It's a fact," continued that disappointed and sore-grieved Indian, and the two men walked on, and

"In sympathetic thought profound"

entered an omnibus together; times being, in the woeful opinion of Mr. Shrimper, altogether too bad to afford cab hire.

CHAPTER XI.

On the Monday following, Mr. Montagu Phipps was nowhere to be found. Acting under medical advice he had retired from the scene of contest, by taking his way, in company with his wife, *viâ* the South Eastern Railway, to Dover, and thence by steamer to Calais.

Winterthorne, who attended the meeting, and was well hissed, followed his colleague's example three days afterwards, he having by that time secured his property from the hands of his creditors, who had by this time

become extremely clamorous. The consequence of these proceedings on the part of the managing directors was a general and still greater disorganization, so far as perplexity of accounts and confusion of audits were concerned, of the company's affairs. One director seized one document; another director followed suit; a third seized the cash book. The cashier seized all the change that he had left, and appropriated it to his own and his fellow clerks' account, as salary due and compensation money. Clever fellows, to look out for themselves!

Everything was in the most lamentable state of confusion. Nobody knew what the bank owed, or who owed to the bank. Mr. Phipps had all the money—he could give the account; but, as it happened, Mr. Phipps had left the country, and was never likely to return again. How commendably

judicious!—how calculated to inspire confidence!—what an act of piety! Phipps, poor man! had need to take care of himself.

Sixty-three thousand pounds and more had this promoter and managing director of the great Oriental Bank of Swindledum, reaped from its coffers, and forty-nine thousand of that amount he had now in his possession, and that man, so situated, had left England without interruption—without a tongue to question, or a hand to arrest him. Winterthorne had not been much less fortunate, his share of the plunder amounted to fifty-eight thousand pounds, besides odd amounts from the other bubble companies with which he was concerned, amounting to thirteen thousand pounds; and he had at the time of his flight from London, nearly the whole of this sum, for, according to established rule, he had

never paid for anything where credit was to be had, since his election to represent Ragland in parliament.

Phipps, less mercenary than Winterthorne, had been generous enough to leave his house full of furniture in charge of the servants. The creditors fell upon this ravenously; it was quite a godsend for them, and the butcher fought against the grocer for some time, as to who should have the greatest share, till it was taken charge of by the solicitors to the shareholders, and no one received a farthing save themselves; it was sold and appropriated to the liquidation of a bill of costs. There were, of course, some securities available by the bank, but some weeks elapsed before it was discovered what or where they were; and then the lawyers laid hold, and after this, nobody heard much about them; in the meantime, they were being gnawed away by more bills of costs.

Contention arose amongst the shareholders; some quarrelled with the Court of Bankruptcy; some quarrelled with the Private Arrangement Act; but in the long run, the lawyers, who were in favour of the former, because the most costly mode of procedure and winding up, vanquished, and the wreck of the great Oriental Bank of Swindledum, Wormwood Street, City, was dragged headlong into bankruptcy.

There was not much to be done with it there, more than making the shareholders pay, or at least issuing writs to that effect; for the majority of them had lost their all—their sole fortunes in the concern, and their only alternatives now were flight or a jail. Some, too much broken hearted and helpless to quit the country, or retire into obscurity, quietly surrendered to the touch of the sheriff's officer, and under his bitter guardianship,

were guided into their unhappy confines. The rest were driven loose upon the world, to drift whithersoever they might.

And all this wailing and gnashing of teeth, this exchange of fine linen for sackcloth, was the handiwork of those two sumptuous but nefarious revellers in stolen wealth — Montagu Phipps and Charles Lucien De Burgh Winterthorne.

Lost in the gloom of a county asylum, Osmond Walpole, a victim to insanity, moans away a dreary life, day after day in hopeless solitude, startling the dungeon and the night with his melancholy cry of "*Jane, Jane, Jane, Jane.*"

Madeline and her uncle still tenant the hall, hermit-like and sorrowing. Seldom are either of them seen. The domestics are fewer than of old. Ruin and grief have made the old man an irritable recluse;

the Oriental Bank of Swindledum has done the one, and the railway catastrophe the other.

Give them thy sympathy, dear reader; there are more than thou thinkest like them.

Mrs. Spankerville is domiciled in poverty with Mr. Ganges Shrimper, at Paris, while her husband and the willing victim of his elopement are travelling to and fro over the continent; while Clifden Castle stands neglected on the hill, and Lady Edward Gulliver wiles away a mournful existence within the dreary pile at Timberdale.

THE

UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE.

A Sequel.

THE

UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Wet and wintry was the night, dark and dank was its every aspect; not a star flickered through the canopy of heaven. The queen of night, with her silver radiance, lay hidden far in the tangled depth of clouds; all nature looked cheerless and barren, and sadness reigned in many hearts.

It was in London, and in the month of December, eighteen hundred and forty-seven. Weary wanderers hurried along, houseless and hungry, knowing not whither they should go for rest.

Groups of twos and threes hung about the doors of metropolitan workhouses, unable to obtain, or waiting to obtain, *relief*. Men and women were herding together—loathsome in their wretchedness—in the temporary sheds of St. Luke's,—sheds that but recently afforded shelter only to cattle; but which workhouse guardians had hired as homes good enough for paupers.

A female figure, clad in mourning, and carrying a child, emerged, at six o'clock, from the mansion of Sir Robert Steel, in Eaton Square, and with hasty step went plashing along, northwards. A sob escaped from her now and again, and tears, one by one, stole down her pale face, which told but too plainly of sorrow at heart and tumult of mind; but unseen, unheard, and unsympathized with, they passed unheeded; and the forlorn creature of our sketch continued treading on her way, passing lamp after

lamp till she reached Paddington. There she stopped, in front of a small, two-storied, brick house, in a short, narrow street, running parallel with Cambridge Terrace. An old woman, withered, wrinkled, and dirty, promptly answered her knock.

"Bless me, Mrs. Hartley!" she ejaculated to the bearer of the child, "is that you? and such a wet night. Come in, Ma'am, Mr. Moxon's up," continued she, closing the door, and leading the way into the small toy-like front parlour of the house.

No sooner had the visitor taken her seat on the old, ragged, and diminutive sofa, therein contained, than she gave her child, for such it was, a nervous clutch, and fell back in a deep swoon.

"My gracious! Mrs. Hartley," exclaimed the old woman, taking hold of her, and releasing the infant from her now unconscious embrace. "Poor thing, poor thing," she

continued, as flurried as her unimpassioned age would allow her to be; and meanwhile untying the bonnet strings of the insensible woman.

She was on the point of calling "Mr. Moxon," when the door of one of the upper rooms was heard to open, and the said Moxon, stretching his neck, pelican-fashion, with the view of looking down stairs from where he stood, asked, in allusion to the noise of arrival which he had heard, "What is that, Mrs. Baggs?" to which Mrs. Baggs, who was his housekeeper, answered, "Oh! lor, sir; come here." In accordance with which polite invitation, a pinch-visaged, wiry-veined, parchment-skinned man, got up in spectacles and a suit of faded threadbare black, made his immediate descent of the stairs, and entered the parlour before mentioned.

On seeing the reclining figure, and hear-

ing that she had fainted, his first act was to level his eyes and spectacles at the ceiling, and place his long, thin fingers in an attitude of prayer, moving his lips meanwhile automaton-fashion.

Consciousness soon returned, and the wet figure opened its glassy eyes and spoke;—spoke, but in a tone so hollow, so sepulchral, that Moxon mentally compared it with voices heard in dreams; heard by the wakeful senses of a sleeping frame, presided over by a soul disturbed;—spoke, but to be interrupted by a consumptive cough; cough, cough—and but to sink once more into a swoon; while the wet clothes clung to the skin, and a groan and a shudder broke audibly to life, and thrilled, in their very sad and melancholy pitifulness, the nerves and soul of the beholding spectacle wearer, for his face twitched and a pang of sympathetic sorrow vibrated within his breast at the mo-

ment; and as his eye met the froth just oozing from her mouth, he involuntarily burst into tears, and exclaimed, mournfully, "Poor creature! what can we do for her?" and flung himself on his knees beside her; a passionate mode of procedure which the dryness of his first appearance left wholly unanticipated.

In the meantime, the child was placed on the carpet in front of the fire, where he set up a cry more piteous than even his mother's groans.

CHAPTER II.

Sir Robert Steel, Baronet, was neither more nor less than the brother of her whom we have just left, lost in unconsciousness. He was a man of this world's true conventional type, and was correspondingly narrow-minded, unflinching, and cruel hearted.

His moral feeling was not sufficiently elastic or acute to have forgiven or extenuated the conventional error into which his sister had fallen, and which had resulted in the birth of her child. That error was a fugitive alliance.

Pity her, dear reader, for though a wrong-doer she might have appeared in the eyes of that relentless stickler for the orthodox observances of society, her brother, she was, nevertheless, a spotless lily of virtue. Pure and uncorrupted was she, although the pangs of contumely gnawed at her heart, and the withering traces of sorrow and disappointment were rapidly ploughing their melancholy index of internal woe on her fastly changing features.

A little more than a year before the incident first recorded, and in the month of September, the now unfortunate mother, then Miss Steel, was staying, together with a lady friend, at Scarborough.

Day by day, as they wandered along the beach, or stood on the rocky head of the coastland, the favourite resort of fashion; or even appeared at the *table d'hôte*, at their hotel; there appeared before them one who

seemed as if enamoured of their presence. He was a guest at the same hotel with themselves.

His manners and appearance were prepossessing, not to say elegant, and the expression of his features, which were almost feminine in their intellectual delicacy of aspect, was set off by a luxuriant head of hair. In height, he was a little under six feet, and gracefully formed, though devoid of that robustness of body which is thought to be the invariable attendant on great strength. He was nevertheless in the glow of health, which his complexion clearly indicated, while the quick expression of his hazel eyes told of an active temperament, and no ordinary restlessness of intellect—speaking of unsatisfied yearnings of heart and ambition. For the size of his frame, he was thin, but his youth,—he was apparently not

more than twenty-three, — fully atoned for the absence of much flesh. When he smiled, his whole face was lighted up with animation, winning in its exhibition of kindness, and of tender feeling, and fascinating in its undefinable charm; for there was in it an expression of love, joy, and regard, which appealed to the heart, and found a ready response in the breast over which it shone, and with woman—oh! loving woman—it was irresistible.

Was it, then, a matter of more than ordinary surprise, that Louisa Steel, upon whom the darts of this Cupid personified were directed, should give back something of the sentiment which fired the soul of Melmoth Hartley, for such was his name. No; for admiration begets admiration in return, and those whom we wish to love us, we must ourselves make in love with themselves.

It was not until a fortnight had elapsed from the time of this eyesight acquaintance at the Yorkshire watering place, that a word was exchanged between the two strangers. Then it occurred thus. The friend of our heroine was indisposed for walking, on one particular morning, preferring thereto a novel, in the conventional three volumes, and the sofa, to the sound of crying sea gulls, and the rude leaping of the waves along the beach; so she remained at the hotel, while Louisa went forth alone. Hartley, from the window of the coffee room saw this, and quickly followed suit and overtook her.

"You will pardon me, I trust, for the liberty I take in addressing you," said he, lifting his hat, and confronting her in the politest manner the circumstance would admit of, "but," he continued, "I have—I trust you will pardon its expression—been

impelled by the force of my feelings of respect and admiration, to make known to you, what I trust you will at least forgive me for entertaining, that is, a love and esteem which I cannot restrain, and which I do not despair may meet with—with your acceptance. Allow me, Miss Steel, to assure you that in taking the liberty of thus introducing myself, I do so with a full consciousness of my own honesty of purpose, and with a full estimation of the respect which is your due. You I know will judge me as I deserve."

Having so said, he paused, awaiting a reply, while Louisa stood, by no means indignant, but blushing and confounded, with half averted head and downcast looks. It was an awkward moment for the maiden, but secretly summoning her courage, she answered:

"Really, sir, I cannot reply to your unexpected address—I——"

"Allow me," put in Hartley, "to relieve you from the pain of any embarrassment attendant on my declaration of sincerity. My destiny—my happiness—is in your hands—your non-rejection is sufficient. I feel crowned with joy and satisfaction."

Louisa felt amused at the novelty of her position; but it was not without emotion that her heart beat so quickly.

"Grant me one request," said Hartley, appealingly.

"If it be, as I have no doubt, proper and honourable, I shall not object."

"It is, Miss Steel, that you allow me to write to you."

"That is a matter, of course, over which I have no control," she answered, with a somewhat coquettish smile.

"You have my gratitude," ejaculated Hartley; and the two walked on together a little way along the beach, while the

waves danced and wallowed in the sunshine, and the hearts of the two wayfarers spoke each a language of mutual love.

CHAPTER III.

When Louisa returned to her rooms, where her friend, Miss Harker, still lay reading on the sofa, she, with all the confiding eagerness of her sex, imparted to her the circumstance of the meeting on the beach.

"What a strange proceeding!" she observed; "but I expected something."

Be it known that Miss Harker had as much reason for this "expected something" as her friend; for they had almost invariably been out together, and had

more than once smiled and tittered, and made observations concerning the gentleman now alluded to; and, it may have been, that Miss Harker was a little disappointed or jealous at the evident preference which the male stranger had shown for our heroine.

"Well, my dear," continued the former, "it's for you to consider of the course to be adopted. Let me look at his card again;" and she laughed as she spoke.

She turned over the card, on which was engraved in plain writing,

MR. MELMOTH HARTLEY,

and handed it back with a giggle of enjoyment, saying, meanwhile,

"How romantic! this deserves an elopement. But who is he? you have not told me that yet."

"Oh!" replied Louisa, "he did not enter into details; he merely said that his

connexions and position were good, but of course I shall hear more." Here she laughed at the adventure, and made mirthful comment to her friend, who still smiled half in wonder, half in amusement, at so novel an occurrence.

While these two young ladies are thus enjoying themselves, let us proceed to lift the curtain, and for a moment disclose to the view the concerns of this our earnest wife-seeker, Mr. Melmoth Hartley.

CHAPTER IV.

On the banks of the river Dee, in the good old city of Chester—that venerable pile, within walls so full of gaols and high cheek bones—there dwelt, at this period of our story, a certain retired captain of her Majesty's army, one Montagu Finch.

Finch, lamentable to relate, was now a widower. He had living, however, one son, who was adrift in life, and a daughter in the first blush of youth and beauty; and here, in Chester, did the now sedate captain wend his daily way through life, in dull,

monotonous, perhaps unbroken peace, such as a man on half-pay, and without further aim or object than the living upon it, might be supposed to enjoy.

Now it must not be supposed, because Finch was a quiet, steady, and sedate personage at this period of our sketch, that he was always so; for, in truth, the said Montagu had been of yore sore given to ungodly glee, and strange pranks had he played with the dice of fortune. The game of life with him had been something very eventful; but now his revelry was over; the scenes of his boyhood and adventures were, together with the escapades of his youth, far removed and hidden from his view.

It may seem a matter of surprise, when we inform the reader that Captain Finch was as yet ignorant of his father; that, in fact, he had never seen him; but that he laboured under the impression that the

worthy in question had died in a foreign country, either before or soon after his birth. Of his mother he knew much but said little. She was resident at Boulogne, and in the enjoyment of an income of three hundred a year, which had been left her by one who had subsequently occupied the place of the father of our Chester friend; but who had now, alas! for himself, yielded up the ghost.

"Ah, Charles Augustus Finch," she used to say, whenever she opened a certain drawer in her escritoire, and beheld therein a paper, written over with verses, and headed, "To Maud," "you behaved very badly—very badly indeed, Charles;" and so saying she would take up the paper and read the verses, and think of her son, Montagu, as she did so,—of him, the sole offspring of their union; and then her thoughts would wander far and wide, through time and

distance, as if attempting to track him out of the wilderness of cities and bring him again face to face with herself; but then arose within her, as she did so, a confusion of doubt and uncertainty, and, as if tired of the retrospection, she would say, "Well, there is but little use thinking about him, when very likely death prevents his thinking about me."

In the supposition of his death she was well justified, seeing that it was forty-one years since the object of her regard, the said Charles Augustus Finch, had been last seen or heard of by her.

She was now a little past her sixtieth year, and the offspring of her union with him, Montagu, of Chester, was in his forty-second summer.

It may be necessary, in order to render more distinct the chief events of her life, to briefly lay before the reader a statement of facts—stubborn, undeniable facts.

Therefore, to begin :—Bath used to be a gay place ; and at Bath, in the year eighteen hundred and one, or thereabouts, the family of Reuben Maxwell, consisting of his wife and daughter, were resident.

It was just then that the before named Charles Augustus Finch found himself a visitor at the same place, and where he first made the acquaintance of Miss Maud Maxwell, at one of the assemblies of that then delightful watering place. He met her, partly by arrangement, on the day following, and on the day again succeeding that, he waited upon Mr. Reuben Maxwell, and after introducing himself as Mr. Charles Augustus Finch, solicited the hand of his daughter.

Mr. Reuben Maxwell was rather surprised than otherwise at this sudden offering at first sight.

" I had the pleasure of seeing you at the

Assembly Rooms a few nights back," said Finch.

"Oh! yes, I remember—yes—just so—quite—" responded Reuben; but before responding further, he took the customary liberty of inquiring into the position of his proposed son-in-law; the answers to which not being satisfactory, either by virtue of Finch's unwillingness, or inability to do otherwise, Mr. Reuben Maxwell declined his consent to the alliance of his daughter to one of whom he knew nothing—"absolutely nothing," save that he wore a respectable amount of jewellery. But the lovers—for such they were—were not to be thwarted. Flight was suggested by Finch; it was acquiesced in by the girl, who, ardent and impetuous, was ready for anything. Not a word was said about it, but, three mornings after the interview between Mr. Maxwell and Finch, the

lovers met by appointment, and took post chaise for London.

No marriage ceremony took place on that day; yet, as "Mr. and Mrs. Finch," the two put up at a roadside inn, while the dark hours of the night rolled by, and the light of the ensuing day ushered them into the metropolis. Happy were they, and even the omitted "I will" was scarcely thought of by the bride.

CHAPTER V.

A LITTLE less than a fortnight after their arrival in London, Charles Augustus Finch, and Maud Maxwell, presented themselves before the altar at Saint Martin's Church, at the corner of Trafalgar Square, and were married—absolutely married, as Mr. Reuben Maxwell would have said.

In the meantime, no communication had taken place between the fugitives and the worthy parent at Bath, who was in a high state of indignation and excitement consequent on such an outrageous proceeding on

the part of his daughter as that of elopement. To do Finch justice, we may as well say that he did not marry for money, but for the simple reason that he fell in love. Maxwell was merely a superannuated admiralty clerk, with six hundred a year for life, so that Finch had not much to look forward to in the way of fortune, even should amity be established. Finch married simply because he felt inclined to do so. His was a nature which neither valued money nor reputation. He was reckless of consequences; and Maud, in thus obeying the impulse of her youthful feelings, linked herself with the exigencies of his career—a course as erratic as it was uncertain. Still, in his very recklessness, there was a dauntless heroism which had its fascination; while, in the boldness and self-dependence of his ever soaring spirit, there was a charm which more commanded admiration than excited contempt.

Perhaps the circumstances incidental to a period of his life but little more than a year removed, had much to do in the formation of his character, and in influencing his tone of mind; for twenty-one is a susceptible age, and it was then that Charles Augustus Finch had become an outcast from the paternal roof, but at the same time a child of liberty, in his own eyes. He had launched his unprotected bark upon the sea of life; and having lifted his sail, he trusted to the guiding gale of fortune to waft him merrily on in happy safety to some by him yet undiscovered isle, where wealth and glory could be reaped, as the drooping corn before the sickle. Alas! that experience, with rueful visage, should ever chase away such mirage of the mind, and leave but a ghastly wreck to mock the pictured magnificence which youth and folly build unto themselves. But even expe-

rience, however bitter, does not kill ardour or destroy hope; and the heart, even when torn and cankered by care and disappointment, still goes on, hoping and yearning, and beats its feeble way against the opposing blasts of life, as a dismasted ship still buffets with the elements, and seems as struggling towards the promised shore.

The father of this our hero of the elopement, Horace Finch by name, was a man of high lineage but unsettled fortune; with a promising future, but uncertain present. A barrister by profession, but nothing by pursuit, he succeeded in ekeing out the means of subsistence through his friends and his wife's private fortune of seven hundred per annum.

A son of Sir Edward Finch, and heir apparent to a baronetcy and immense estates, he was not endowed with sufficient energy of character to allow hopes of his ever rising by

merit; he contented himself, therefore, with the ultimate prospect of rising by heritage. He lived in a style at once fashionable and unostentatious, in a small detached mansion at Brighton; where, by excellent management, successful play, and still more successful betting, he gave the idea of at least two thousand a year. Here, with his wife and an only daughter, he led a comparatively happy but indolent existence, trusting to the manna to be rained down to him where he could gather without toil.

He had given his son and heir the means of a liberal education; but the latter, either through a transmitted spirit of laziness inherent in him, or an overpowering preference for the sports of his university companions, left Cambridge a "plucked" man; having excelled more in the art of getting into debt, horsemanship, boating, and pugilism, than the more sterling endowments incidental to Alma Mater.

The cause of the final rupture between the father and son, already alluded to, had its rise in the extravagant and unjust propensities of the latter, who, brooking no words of remonstrance, actually exasperated his father to personal violence; which, being actively returned by the other, to the disfigurement of the elder countenance, nothing remained but to banish the offender, who was forthwith dispatched, and "for ever."

Thus briefly have we traced the outline of circumstances connecting and concerning the house of Finch, from which we will now turn to sketch the matrimonial career of the fugitives of Bath.

CHAPTER VI.

For the first month after their arrival in London, Charles Augustus Finch, and his beaming bride, feasted and revelled away the joyful season of the honeymoon in one of the fashionable hotels west of Charing Cross.

A fact that we have not yet announced is, that Maud was motherless, which, when a rather severe and irascible father is taken into consideration, may account for the girl's so willingly yielding to the temptation of flight, without feeling,

as is often the case, that alloy of *after-regret* which steals away rapture, and makes felicity an empty name.

"We had better write to your father, I think, Maud," suggested Finch, as he lay in bed one morning.

"Yes, love, I think we had;" responded the pretty fair; "or he'll be angry."

Finch laughed, and said, he should think he was that already—getting over it a little by this time—and Maud laughed also, and the two, clasped in each other's arms, resolved on writing that very day.

They wrote. The purse of Finch was by this time rapidly collapsing; for, when he took post chaise from Bath, it contained but forty pounds; a magnificent sum to marry upon. But love conquers difficulties; the only danger to be apprehended is, that the difficulties do not kill the love; for we know the proverb of

poverty coming in at the door, and love flying out at the window; a truism which many of us may have experienced. Unsophisticated youth, however, is sanguine, ardent, hopeful, joyous; pining at nothing short of absolute breadlessness; trusting to chance with a contented happy spirit; never despairing. Of such a nature was the bride of our young adventurer.

Finch considered it would be sheer waste of money to pay their hotel bill out of so small a balance as he now possessed; so he drew up a promissory note instead, for the full amount, viz., ninety-eight pounds fifteen shillings, or, as it turned out, about seventy-two pounds more than he was possessed of, which my host readily accepted, after a highly plausible explanation from Finch, never thinking that "gentlefolks" would marry without having at least ninety-eight pounds fifteen shillings somewhere.

So commenced the proceedings after matrimony, of Charles Augustus Finch. With pain he now began to see the necessity for stirring himself in the world. They had removed into furnished lodgings for the sake of economy; although, for that matter, the hotel where he had first stayed was the most economical place in the world for him, seeing that he paid "*nothing at all*"; whereas, now, he was tormented with his first batch of weekly bills.

"The bank won't stand this," soliloquised he: "promissory notes won't do for small amounts. I must take a furnished house, and run a score with all concerned; then promissory notes *might* do, if they could get nothing better, but"—and here he paused—"it's a mistake to rush into matrimony without money." He paused again; "What can I do?" he asked himself: "nothing—absolutely nothing. I see

nothing for it but my wits": and to his wits from thenceforth he solely trusted.

No answer was returned to their united epistles by the morose father at Bath, and, seemingly, none was cared about. It was during the month passed at the hotel that Finch wrote the verses "To Maud," which were ever after treasured by her. Finch's next move was into a furnished house, and for no less than twelve months did he succeed in there living upon "*nothing at all.*" Then, however, duns long clamorous, resorted to writs and judgments—he was compelled to vacate the house, as well as to keep out of the way of his numerous creditors.

After battling still further with adversity and suspended credit, Charles Augustus Finch found himself and bride in very sorry circumstances indeed, and, to aggravate such, she was on the verge of

her accouchement. A son was born (the captain Montagu Finch of Chester): five months more rolled away, and other debts, and still more palpable wretchedness, overtook them. Finch suggested the return of Maud to the house of her father; but she resolutely objected even to attempt such a thing.

It was at this crisis that Finch enlisted in the —— regiment of foot ordered to Quebec. He repented of the action three days afterwards, and went to the lodgings at which he had left his wife, to acquaint her with the cause and deed which had occasioned his absence. To his dismay, he found that she had left, the arrears of rent had been paid by an acquaintance, to whom he was already indebted in a pecuniary view, and whom, moreover, he hated, and was jealous of. He used his best endeavours to trace

out his wife and child, but in vain; he was so shackled by his poverty and enlistment, that there was no hope for him; broken-spirited, and downcast, with his conscience accusing him, he abandoned himself to the tide of circumstances, and sank into the obscurity of the army as a private soldier, caring not what became of him, and just as ready for the perpetration of murder as of suicide.

It was the acquaintance here alluded to, one Chorley Twining, who bequeathed the three hundred a-year upon which Mrs. Charles Augustus Finch subsequently subsisted at Boulogne. We will not say more. When the child Montagu grew up, Chorley Twining, having, in the meantime, borne all expenses, incidental to his adoption, procured him a cornetcy in a cavalry regiment, and made him an allowance of a hundred per annum, being as much as his income would permit of.

By that last act, Montagu was fairly launched in life, and his mother felt something like satisfaction; but how much more satisfactory if it had been the deed of his father! Her conscience reproached her. She had been driven from happiness by the force of poverty.

Why did her husband desert her? she asked herself that question. Had he ever looked for her since? Was he still living, and where? Conflicting thoughts rose up within her, and she felt very sad. Tears, sprung from the recesses of her heart, trickled down her pale cheek, and she was often comfortless.

CHAPTER VII.

In order to establish the connexion between Melmoth Hartley and the personages we have just made acquaintance with, it is simply necessary to introduce him as the son of the ex-captain of Chester, and consequently the grandchild of the fugitives from Bath.

If it be asked why this *alias*, we can only say that it had been recently assumed, for the triple considerations of shielding himself from arrest for debt, of masking his identity in case of contemplated bigamy, and also owing to an undutiful feeling of disgust

which had taken possession of him since the occurrence of a final rupture between himself and his only surviving parent, whom he had wronged more grievously than even his grandfather, the adventurous Charles Augustus, had done *his* father before him. We are not about to add lustre to crime, or perfidy, but it suits the moral of our strain to picture prominently to the view this scion of the house of Finch, baptised Caleb—this the Melmoth Hartley of the hotel at Scarboro'.

Unfortunately for the present happiness of Miss Louisa Steel, she yielded to the attractions, and responded to those words of love which were proffered her by the fascinating stranger of the Yorkshire watering place.

She admired him for the very dash which caused his self-introduction, and listened but vainly to the dissuasive voice of her friend and

companion, Miss Harker. Interviews and letters soon crowded on each other. Hartley made out a very plausible tale of money and connexions, and ascertained sufficient of the family and concerns of her whom he had set a trap to ensnare, to make him build up higher expectations of wealth than he afterwards discovered were to be in her realized. The acquaintance so far thickened within the first fortnight after the introduction, that Hartley gave intimation of his intended marriage to the parish registrar of Scarboro', which was to take place on or about a certain day mentioned.

Apart from any base motives, the romantic nature of the new friendship was such as fired the breast and impelled the blood of the young adventurer, and therefore his ardent prosecution of the suit was attributable, so far, to the genuine feelings of his heart. Had he been a rich man, he

would have been about the last in the world to run after an heiress; but a needy man is compelled, and often unwillingly, to do that which, if placed above want, he would scorn.

It was on the morning named by Hartley to the parish registrar, that Miss Steel took her customary way to the beach, there to meet him who had so far gained upon the object of his admiration — for admire her he did—of her to whom he was unfeignedly endeared. He had hinted at the policy of their immediate union on the three previous days, and now he was resolved, if possible, to induce her compliance. Louisa laughed and looked serious alternately. She felt just as much inclined for a frolic as the expectant bridegroom. She thought that if Hartley, with everything in his favour, youth, appearance, family, and fortune, did not hestitate to

cast his lot with her, she had no reason to do so. She, now in her twenty-third year, had long pined for marriage, as many were doing beside her. She had no reason to doubt the statements made to her—it was the last thing she thought of; moreover, so that he was respectable, she cared not for money.

However near her thoughts might have been to a union in matrimony with Hartley, one thing is certain, namely, that she had not the slightest idea, when she left her friend Miss Harker at the hotel, that she was to return as the wife of that gentleman—but the most unlikely things in the world sometimes occur, and so it seemed in this case, for the Miss Steel of the morning came back in a high state of feeling, and as "Mrs. Melmoth Hartley," took a hasty leave of her friend, and left Scarboro' for York a few minutes afterwards.

The parish registrar had effectually enchained them on the link of matrimony, and into whose office Louisa was almost unconsciously beguiled by him who vowed his love, and drew forth corresponding feelings from her whom he longed to call his bride. And Melmoth Hartley did love her; better, however, for her, did he afterwards think, would it have been that he had never done so: it was a love which sprung up as a weed, likely to be torn up with the first rake of adversity—of, in their case, pending want, for neither were endowed with the gift of gold; and what other than wretchedness in this age of the world, and the present state of society, can the alliance of poverty with poverty be productive of, even with the purest and truest of mankind? Setting aside the couple under our notice, where is there one woman out of a thousand, taken from the middle or upper ranks of society,

that would not rebel at the encroachments of the demon want, or rather, at the want of money, and thereby make a hell of that union upon earth which was ordained for the enhancement of our pleasures and the elevation and refinement of our souls and feelings.

Fool be his stigma who would wedge his own body in the pillory of matrimony, without having, at the outset, looked well to the future; for reproach is more bitter than ruin itself, and a woman's tongue is as a fang which stingeth.

Alas! that our system of society, so base and degenerate as it is, should, in its organization, heap up exclusive wealth for the few and leave the many to fight with and prey upon each other as do the people of the nineteenth century; and alas! still more, that the spirit of unbrotherly, unfraternal isolation which rules our commu-

nity should exist. It has been said, that civilization is a mistake. *Punch* might say he verily believes it; but the fact is, we are only approaching civilization; posterity will look back upon our age as one of rude contention; and, as regards half the population of our kingdom, even at the present day, it cannot be said that we are more intellectual or refined than were our ancestors in the days of so-called barbarism; while we lack the charm, yea, the nobility, the independence, and the freedom appertaining to savage life. We are grovelling, narrow-minded strugglers after money, and we have the humiliating knowledge that we depend upon money for our daily bread. Behold the working labourer—see how he toils from early morning till night, and contrast his wearisome fate with that of the aborigines of any country. Should he cease to work, he ceases to have bread; ignoble struggle! Hard is the lot of the many.

CHAPTER VIII.

Marriage has been, not erroneously, termed a lottery. As might be supposed, with regard to Melmoth Hartley—so rash and abandoned to the tide of circumstances as he was—married as he married—it was quite a matter of chance and uncertainty with him as to the exact worldly fortune of the woman he espoused. He guessed she had something He was rather careless than otherwise on the subject; unjustly so. He was young, ardent, and reckless, and had no scruples

of conscience about dragging another to a worse condition than his own. As for himself, he could, by sheer force of his sex, his existence, and his bodily strength, buffet with and prey upon the world. It is different with woman—her only retreat is to infamy. He had not a sufficient amount of moral rectitude or foresight to judge of the possibility, or the probability, of her whom he had vowed to succour and protect, being left a helpless victim out on the arid wilderness of the world, there to hunger—perhaps perish—after enduring the hissing reproach or heartless neglect of canting relatives, friendless and alone; for we are a stony-hearted generation, and each, either too sordid or too busy in fighting his own battle of life, to track home hunger, or trace death to some premature cause; and our own family relations are often our worst and most lingering foes.

No; Melmoth Hartley acted on the impulse of his evil instinct, age, and resolutions, and driven on by the force of circumstances, he was too ready to clutch at whatever presented itself worth having, as he drifted down the swift and uneven stream of life, to let anything pass by that he thought within his grasp; and thus it was that Louisa Steel became Mrs. Hartley.

A little more than a week was passed by the newly allied couple in that Eboracum of the Romans—the City of York. By that time, Hartley had ascertained the nature and extent of his wife's fortune, which was, that she had none whatever. She was an orphan, and for the preceding eight years, since the death of her mother, had depended upon her brother, the before mentioned Sir Robert Steel, for maintenance. She had jewellery, however, worth about a hundred pounds,

besides sixty pounds in money. Hartley himself possessed fifteen guineas, and a tolerable wardrobe. Beyond these sums, however, nothing further was to be relied upon, or even expected, save as the produce of their own industry.

Many, however, marry on still less substance; people may join themselves together in matrimony with *nothing at all*, and yet be happy; it only requires a buoyancy of temperament which can adapt itself to anything and everything, and an elasticity of will, and contentment for the time being with the things that are, to make poverty as happy a state as wealth.

The frailest bark, when in trim, rides the waves more proudly and safely than the greatest ship when overladen, and achieves a successful journey, where the latter often founders. Care not for the empty show of society; heed not the per-

verted opinions of fashion's votaries. Each man stands alone in the world a free, independent, and unfettered being (I except slavery, where the stronger rules the weaker); let him act as becomes his common greatness; let him be ruled by none; let him soar above, and pass uninfluenced by the babbling breath of his fellow travellers through life. Let each think and resolve for himself; let the worth and correctness of the dogmas which may be submitted to him, be tested in the crucible of his own judgment; then shall invention and improvement make rapid strides in enlightenment, and while elevating and enriching the generation of his time, transmit to posterity a higher and more impelling civilization,—give to his descendants originality of enterprise, and so dissolve those fragile shackles in which conventional society stands enchained. Would that individuals knew their strength.

CHAPTER IX.

We have made ourselves acquainted with the pecuniary position of the newly espoused couple. Now let us briefly follow their fortunes. After the week passed at a York Hotel, the two, at the suggestion of Hartley, came up to London. That place abounded with his creditors; but such he considered a matter of small consequence, so long as he kept away from them; for, a man, though he have half a dozen sheriff's officers after him, may walk about London for months, perhaps years, without meeting one of them.

On their first arrival in town, they took up their residence at a private hotel in Albemarle Street, but very soon quitted it, and entered upon possession of a furnished house in Welbeck Street, the genius of the bridegroom prompting such as the most expedient line of procedure, in the present state of what he termed the exchequer. Of course the advantage sought was merely one of credit; for the expenses incidental to life in Welbeck Street promised to be even greater than those of the hotel. But, as credit in most cases is as good for the time-being as money, there was no hesitation on the part of Hartley in trying his best in that direction.

Accordingly, he laid himself out for the thing, as he termed it, to the subsequent and universal chagrin, however, of all the tradesmen whom he favoured with his patronage. Nothing up to this time had

been done in the way of ascertaining the views and feelings of Sir Robert Steel, with regard to his sister's marriage. True, Louisa had written him a letter informing him of the event on the very day of her union, and in the interval which elapsed between the ceremony and her departure from the Scarborough Hotel; but it merely announced the fact, giving no particulars, and inviting no reply—for no address was given where a letter might be received.

"What do you think is the best to be done, love?" asked Louisa on the morning of their removal to Welbeck Street, and in allusion to her brother.

"Well!" said Melmoth; "I've been thinking it over, and in my opinion the best thing that can be done is for me to write to him, or"—here he paused, half ruminatingly,—"what do you say, Loo, to our going to Eaton Square, and confronting him together."

"Oh! I should dread that," replied the wife; "I'd rather write to him first. You had better write to him, as you say, and then, dear, we can act accordingly."

"Very well, my love," responded Hartley; "as your ladyship pleases."

Louisa smiled, and as the two stood together she half nestled in his bosom. Her husband pressed her in a gentle embrace, and stooping, kissed her fondly. Tears, woman's tears, filled her eyes as she, with arm-encircled waist, leant against his more sturdy frame. They were the tears of doubt and regret; she felt that by the rashness of her marriage she had forfeited the regard of her brother. She was sure he would be angry—she had done him an injustice—would he forgive her? These were the thoughts that travelled through and haunted her brain. She had not a sufficiency of moral courage to view the

circumstances of her case with indifference or a smile.

Her brother, the baronet, had been her sole means of support for years; she had shared his home; and the allowance of a hundred and fifty per annum, which he had made her, had enabled her to defray her milliners' bills with tolerable regularity. Now she felt that these things were gone, and she knew not whether she had rushed to a better or a worse fate. The first gush of feeling—the first flight of fancy, which impelled her to her present condition, had subsided, and she gazed, within her own mind, upon a less glowing picture than she had at first beheld, while those visions of romance, which she had once conjured up for herself, had flitted away and left her with a troubled soul and a faltering spirit to await the future. It will be said that this was not a healthy state of mind and

feeling for a bride a month only after matrimony. We admit that it was not. She had not sufficient firmness, resolution, and self-dependence, to support what she now looked upon as the unsanctioned act of her marriage. She was not confiding and trusting enough to rest happy in the strength of her husband.

Why did she do that which she was now sorry for? As she had become a wife, why did she not abide by her condition happily and contentedly; and if required, resign and surrender her claims on all save him. Alas! she had bitter cause to rue it. She was fidgetty and felt herself reproached for not having first obtained the consent of her brother to her union with Hartley, and she could not rest till she made it up with him.

With a view to this end, therefore, her first act, after reaching Welbeck

Street, was to pen a long epistle to the baronet, imploring his forgiveness, and making other supplications, which letter was dispatched, unread by Hartley, to the discomfited brother, while Louisa anxiously awaited either his presence or reply. Three days, however, passed away, and neither arrived.

"He won't write. No. He feels that I've acted wrongly towards him; I can never ask him for anything again." Thus spoke Louisa lamentingly.

"He be shot!" ejaculated Hartley, with unusual levity; "who cares for him. Come here, my love. I don't like to see you so apparently dependant for your happiness and peace upon any one—your unworthy husband excepted. But if you want to ascertain your brother's state of mind on the subject of ourselves, we'll call upon him, or I'll write to him, or do anything

you like, my darling;" and, so saying, he rose from his chair, and half embracing, kissed her.

"I think, love, you'd better write."

"Write then I shall," responded the bridegroom; and he resolutely laid hand on the quill of some by-gone fretful porcupine, and drawing near him the papier maché which enclosed some heavily taxed "cream laid," he proceeded to address Sir Robert Steel.

"What shall I call him? *My dear brother?*" asked he, humorously, at the same instant, however, penning the formal *Sir*. The epistle produced was calm, gentlemanly, conciliatory, dignified, and prudent, quite a proper letter for the occasion. Here it is.

"13, Welbeck Street.

"SIR,—It may, perhaps, be necessary for

me to apologise for not having previously written to acquaint you with the union together in matrimony of your sister and myself. Believe me, I have an inexpressible satisfaction in claiming her as my wife, and as such I trust that you will still consider her with that brotherly regard so long and so laudably displayed by you during the happy years of her maidenhood. I address you now both as a matter of duty and justice towards her on my part, and with a view to the reestablishment of that mutual concord and affection, the thread of which I should be sincerely sorry to see ever broken between you.

"With regard to the circumstances of our union, the only objection to which was the rapidity with which it was consummated, leaving no opportunity of submitting it for your approval, I trust, that upon consideration, you will waive any objection

you may have entertained upon the subject. For my own part, I look back and regard that episode in my ordinary life with the most unfeigned delight, seeing that it has put me in possession of that which I should otherwise have lacked. I allude to her who is now the pride as well as the joy of my existence.

"I should have entered more fully into the detail of attendant circumstances having relation to our marriage, had not Louisa already written to you on two occasions informatory of the event. I must remark, with a view to my personal justification, that I have long looked upon the conventional barriers of society with a disdain approaching to contempt, and that with regard to the institution of matrimony, I consider that those whose persons and happiness are directly involved in it, are alone the parties whose taste and judg-

ment ought to be consulted in the matter; and, moreover, that it is contrary to the dignity of each or any individual of the great family of mankind not to possess, on a subject of such vital importance to themselves, a will and a resolution of their own. The interference of parents and others in authority with the future of those concerned, on the one subject of marriage—whom they shall marry, and whom they shall not marry—is popularly known to have wrought more evil, created more misery, and pandered more to the base and mercenary desires of an already over-vitiated community, than all the errors and rashness of youth; while it has narrowed the mind to a standard which the natural impulses and feelings would never have yielded to, before being cramped in the prisons of a perverted authority, and by so doing, as a natural consequence, made

thousands of ill mated wives prove false; for matrimony to such gives a liberty which they never before enjoyed, and they gratify their longings as they best can, rather despising their husbands than otherwise, for whom they never entertained an affection, but whom they were forced, in their yielding unresisting nature to marry, not for love, but for money, position—anything—yes, anything but the one thing needful for happiness.

"Having thus stated my opinion with regard to marrying, amongst the upper classes in general, I trust that you will be prepared to exonerate me from any intentional wrong with respect to mine; and I do this for the sake of my wife, sincerely trusting that you will pardon in her the liberty which she took in judging and acting for herself, for which I can but admire her the more, and exalt her as a

heroine worthy of the highest emulation amongst her sex. With the fullest and most brotherly regard for yourself, I, together with my wife, beg to remain,

"Yours very faithfully and sincerely,
"MELMOTH HARTLEY.

"Sir Robert Steel, Bart."

And this letter was posted, and by the fair hand of Louisa, in order that there might be no doubt about its reaching its destination. Days again rolled by, but still no answer came. The effect of this was to fill the mind of Hartley with contempt for his brother-in-law.

"Take no further notice of him," was his advice to Louisa.

She, however, wrote again, unknown to her husband, imploring his, the brother's, forgiveness, and after that there did come a letter. Had it not arrived, she would

have called at the house in Eaton Square, from which, up to the present time, her timidity, and the disrelish of appearing before the familiar faces of the domestics, had prevented her.

That letter ran thus, and was void of the usual preparatory address.

"I have received several letters from you, and one from a Mr. Melmoth Hartley. I write to express my regret that you should have acted in so improper and irregular a manner as you have done, and also to request that, as I feel it incumbent upon me to decline making the acquaintance of the party referred to, no more letters may be addressed to me by either of you. I am sorry that you should have so disgraced me as well as yourself by your conduct; but I wish you to distinctly understand that for the future you are to consider yourself as entirely dependent

upon Mr. Hartley, as I withdraw the allowance formerly made to you.

"ROBERT STEEL."

Louisa had this epistle handed to her when alone. She read it eagerly and wept after it. Hartley was from home at the time; but when he returned she handed it to him, and with anxious coyness watched his countenance as he read it. His lip curled scornfully, as in silence he perused, and a look of indignant contempt settled upon his features as he gave it back into the hand of its owner.

"Do you think he doubts the fact of our marriage?" were the first words he spoke.

"Doubts our marriage!" exclaimed Louisa, half startled by the interrogation. "I don't know! why should he? I hope not—really—perhaps he does!" and with girlish simplicity she asked—"Why should he? we *were* married."

"Yes, love!" replied Hartley, "we were. But it strikes me, from the tone of that note, that he has at least a doubt upon the subject. I must call and see him for your sake; and if he treats me in the sneering way he indulges in here, I'll"—he broke the sentence and paused.

"What, dear?" asked the wife.

"Why horsewhip him!" was the reply.

CHAPTER X.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the words last chronicled were uttered. Hartley rang the bell and instructed the page who attended to order the brougham. We may here mention that the vehicle was hired by the month; of course it was never paid for, but that is another matter. The brougham came. Hartley entered it alone and drove direct to the residence of Sir Robert Steel. The result, however, was, that the baronet declined to see him when his card was presented, and that Melmoth

Hartley returned home no further advanced in negociations than at starting. Months passed away after this, and no further attempts were made at reconciliation.

They had been just seven months in the house when Hartley was arrested for debt, at an unexpected moment, and only a few minutes before he intended quitting it for ever. This was a fatal circumstance for him, helpless as he was; it was like the fox in the trap, so far as getting out by any other means than the insolvent court were concerned. He mourned his fate bitterly; he cursed the existence of money; he cursed his own poverty. He was conducted in the first instance to a sponging house, and from thence he was conveyed, by virtue of a writ of *habeas*, to the Queen's Prison.

In the meantime, his wife, who was verging on her confinement, had taken up her abode at apartments which had been

engaged by Hartley two days previous to his arrest. They were situated in Oxford Terrace, Hyde Park.

As a matter of course the absence of her husband was, under the circumstances, a very difficult one for Mrs. Hartley to deal with at her new home. The people who kept the house thought it exceedingly strange, notwithstanding the lady's calm statement that Mr. Hartley had been unexpectedly called out of town; and the young wife found herself without sympathy and very unhappy, and awkwardly placed indeed.

Each day she performed the lonely pilgrimage to the place of her husband's incarceration, and talked with him and wept by his side. But beyond consolation in his distress, she could afford him no help. There was no path to liberty open to him but that through the Court named, and

it would be months before he could reach even such, and then, in all probability, he would be remanded for months more. What would become of his wife in the meantime? The thought pained him, and he felt himself the most unhappy, the most unfortunate of men.

"I think," said he, addressing his wife, on the fifth day after his arrest, "you had better tell the people at the house where I am. It will look much better than my continued absence, without a sufficient reason."

And, accordingly, that evening she communicated to her landlady the intelligence of her husband's captivity. The landlady looked dark and dismal on hearing the news; but she was a woman not without a spark of good feeling left in her nature, although, like most needy lodging-house keepers, she was mercenary and suspicious.

However, she was a mother herself, and she consequently sympathised with one who bore evidence in her own outward person, of soon adding one more to the immense list of mothers that had preceded her.

The result of the conference was, that Mrs. Hartley was to remain in the house till after her accouchement, by which time it was hoped Mr. Hartley would have recovered from his difficulties. It must not be supposed that the landlady acceded to this arrangement, without being assured by Louisa that she had the means of payment, and an exhibition of twenty sovereigns; and the circumstance of her having a valuable wardrobe, tended very much to establish confidence in the mind of the housekeeper as to her being *paid*. The chief object, however, of Louisa's speaking to her at all on the matter was, that of maintaining her

respectability,—that is, not to allow of the existence of doubts as to her being a married woman.

Eighteen days after this, the wife of the so-called Melmoth Hartley gave birth to a son in the house in Oxford Terrace.

CHAPTER XI.

It may be well to here announce, that the father of Charles Augustus Finch, whom we last left in the expectation of the title and estates of his father, Sir Edward Finch, duly succeeded to the same on the decease of the latter.

Twelve months afterwards, the news of this accession reached Charles Augustus himself, who was then serving as a private soldier with his regiment at Quebec; and such was the signal for him to return to England, as soon as opportunity allowed

him. It was, therefore, a fortunate circumstance, that at an early subsequent date, his regiment was ordered home; and with it he journeyed.

His first act after reaching England, was to write to his father, acquainting him with his position, a thing that he had not hitherto done, the result of which was, that up to that time, the former had been in ignorance as to whether his son—his only son, the outcast, was dead or alive, or where on earth, if living, he was likely to be.

The effect of this letter was little less than startling to the baronet, whose surprise, however, was only equalled by his delight at finding an heir to his title and estates; and he, from that moment, forgave the once wild lad his follies, and offences, and took measures to buy him out of the army with all dispatch. He

had now eighty thousand a year, with a countryseat in Essex, another in Dorsetshire, and a town mansion in Belgrave Square. His wife, and only daughter, still lived; but the latter had recently married a banker, of Lombard Street, so that his wife had alone remained to cheer the domestic hearth, and add solace to that home to which he now welcomed the prodigal son.

His mother wept over and kissed him with tumultuous joy on his return, and the father smiled once more with hope.

Sir Horace Finch felt a happy man from the day of that eventful reconciliation with his son, whose delight was even greater to escape from the ranks of the army and find himself the heir apparent to so much wealth, and the dignity of a title.

CHAPTER XII.

Charles Augustus Finch had, as it happened, never definitely informed his wife as to who his relations were, or where they might be found. He had rather avoided the topic than otherwise, but when he did speak of them, it was with no particular minuteness, and he confessed to having had such a rupture at home, that his intention was never to return; and that, as for the hope of at any time receiving assistance from his father, even if the latter had it in his power to afford him

such, there was not the most remote chance, unless, indeed, as he facetiously remarked, it was to buy a rope to hang him with. Thus, when he left home on that morning of his enlistment, his unfortunate wife, Maud, neither knew where to look for his father or his mother, or yet anyone belonging to him, and she had remained in the same ignorance ever since.

The mind of Finch had been continually haunted by the recollection of his wife and child since the time of their separation. All those weary months—those years that he had passed in the "citadel" at Quebec, did he think of her and her child. He would occasionally lean for hours from the flagstaff tower of that ancient barrack and fortification, and, while gazing on the St. Lawrence, as it rolled beneath, review the circumstances of his life, and wonder, but in vain, as to what had become of that

wife and child, as to what fate had overtaken them. Therefore it was, that this feeling, being still paramount in his mind, after his return to England, he made it his business to inquire diligently after them; and this he did for the child's sake more than the mother's, as he entertained the belief that when she left her lodgings in company with the before-mentioned Chorley Twining, she had done so with intentions anything but flattering to himself, and, as the reader is aware, his suspicions were correctly founded. But all his efforts after their discovery were in vain.

Sixteen years after his return from Canada, his father died, and he at once inherited his title and estates.

CHAPTER XIII.

Five years after this, Sir Charles Augustus Finch was walking in the Rue St. Honoré, at Paris, when he suddenly found himself face to face with no other than his long lost wife, who, by the merest chance, happened to be there also, having arrived in Paris only the day previously from Boulogne.

Both shrunk back in dismay. Was it a vision, a dream, or reality? Neither spoke for some moments. Passers by were amazed; and so were the girls in the glove shop opposite. Nevertheless, how quiet the

scene compared with the tumult that raged at that moment in each other's breasts!

The woman was the first to speak, "Is that Charles?" she asked, faintly.

Charles frowned, and the next instant sprung forward with excitement, exclaiming, "Yes, it is Maud. Maud, is that you? Heaven, where have you been?"

He was almost breathless, almost fainting with excitement. The other was comparatively unimpassioned.

"Where is the boy?" he inquired, with voice thick and indistinct; but before the question was answered, he staggered and fell lifeless to the ground.

CHAPTER XIV.

Both by the passport, and cards found on the person of the deceased, his identity as her husband was proven to the old lady, and there was but little difficulty in discovering the place at which he had been residing in Paris, where his servant told the rest.

The amazement and joy of the venerable Maud knew no bounds when she found that he really was a baronet, and so immensely rich. She proclaimed herself his widow, and prepared to take possession of every-

thing belonging to him. She even wanted to lay hands on the dead man's jewelry and luggage, and the creature was angry when his servant forbade her. She was a mere cat so far as her feelings of delicacy, or even decency, were concerned on the occasion. She was as unsusceptible of emotion as a pumpkin. Age had blunted whatever tenderness of heart she ever possessed, and she had degenerated into something of the vulture in her disposition.

As might be expected, her first act was to write to her son, the before named Captain Montagu Finch, of Chester, acquainting him of the strange circumstance of the meeting with, and sudden death of his father; the effect of which unexpected communication on the mind of that individual was nothing less than tremendous, and quite equal to an electric shock in infusing new life into his frame. He felt

ready to leap up as high as the ceiling; but being unable to do that, he drank till intoxicated, so elated was he with the news of the discovery of his father, and such unexpected rank and wealth, to which he was sole heir. And little indeed was his happiness alloyed by the melancholy incident which had attended the fatal meeting of his adventurous parents in the Rue St. Honoré, at Paris.

The certificate of the marriage at St. Martin's Church, London, of Charles Augustus Finch, with Maud Maxwell, was duly produced, and the male issue of that alliance, in the person of Montagu Finch, succeeded to the title and estates without opposition.

This accession took place in the March of the year eighteen hundred and forty-seven, two years after his son Caleb had been last heard of, and six months after

Caleb, under the *alias* of Melmoth Hartley, had married Louisa Steel at Scarborough.

Thus the reader will perceive that at the time of Hartley's arrest in Welbeck Street his father was a baronet, and with as large a landed estate as that which had been inherited generations before by his ancestors.

"Where can Caleb be? I wish I knew where to find him," spoke Sir Montagu. "Strange lad! I wonder whether he's living?"

CHAPTER XV.

Months passed away after the birth of the boy in Oxford Terrace. The scanty means of the young mother had become exhausted, and by force of such she had been compelled to quit the apartments to which we have had occasion to allude, while her husband still remained a prisoner for debt. She had not a friend in the world to whom she could appeal; even her old companion of Scarborough was useless to her; for a coolness had arisen between them from the day of her marriage, which had resulted in a

total estrangement; moreover, the lady in question had gone abroad, and was just as likely to be found at Rome as at Nice; at Florence as at Baden-Baden.

From Oxford Terrace the mother and child removed into a mean lodging in the vicinity of the Queen's Bench Prison, where she remained till the day upon which we first introduced her. On that day, however, she had been absolutely turned out of the house in which she had been living, in consequence of the non-payment of her rent, and she had consulted long and mournfully with her imprisoned husband as to what was advisable, what was possible to be done.

"Don't you think, dear, if I was to take the child and make one more attempt to see my brother, something might be done? The child might soften him to some little compassion."

"I see nothing else for it," replied the husband, moodily, "and as regards lodgings, I think you had better go to George Moxon's; that is, if your brother is so much a brute as to refuse you shelter."

She knew Moxon well by sight, and had on two occasions been to the house on her husband's business.

Moxon had been an attorney in his day; but for some misdeed or other his name had been struck off the rolls, and he had never succeeded in getting it put on again. He was now, to use his own description, a commission agent and bill broker; and during the whole time that Hartley had lived in Welbeck Street, he had been occupied on his account in finding out discounters for his bills, and tradesmen who would give him credit; and, since his imprisonment, Moxon had been almost a daily visitor at the Queen's Bench. He was even still en-

deavouring to get more bills discounted on the part responsibility of Hartley, who gave his signature as drawer, acceptor, or endorser, just as Moxon might think best for the achievement of the desired end. Of course the pecuniary position, as also the location of that gentleman, were misrepresented by Moxon to those to whom he presented the bills for discount. He described all whose names appeared on the bills as "good" men, "sure for hundreds," and at the least with "the best of expectations." He would not touch a bill were the circumstances otherwise, oh! no; they might rely upon what he said; and he talked largely about "the first of references"—individuals who shared in the plunder—and not unseldom succeeded in procuring the discount, at the usual rate of sixty per cent.

The wife of Hartley set out for the house of her brother with a choking sensation in

her breast, and tears in her eyes. All the way from the Southwark Bridge Road to Eaton Square, did the poor creature, with enfeebled health, plod on her weary way, with her child in her arms. It commenced raining soon after she started, and her scanty clothing became saturated with wet, and she was unable to shelter even the child from the inclemency of the weather.

She arrived at the house of Sir Robert Steel, footsore and exhausted, as the church clock at one end of the Square was about to strike six; she took hold of the visitors' bell with a timid, trembling hand, which timidity was perceptible in the undecided manner in which it rang. A powdered footman answered the summons. He at once recognised her, and assumed, for what would have been a sneer had he not known her—she had something of the look of a mendicant—a patronising look, as he asked

her to walk in; and in reply to her enquiry, "Is Sir Robert Steel at home?" answered,

"Yes'm, he is."

"Do you wish to see him?" he inquired.

"I do;" replied the visitant, dripping with rain, and standing on the mat nearest the hall door.

"Sir Robert's sister, I think?" continued the man inquiringly.

"Yes," feebly spoke the mother; and the footman departed on his errand, to announce the arrival to his master.

The baronet looked up with surprise from his library chair, as the servant spoke. His face reddened, and expressed extreme displeasure. He hesitated, as if in doubt, for some moments, before he spoke; his words then were "I'm engaged; I cannot see her;" and his voice became thick with suppressed rage and excitement.

The servant paused for a moment, and

eyed his master, to see whether any further message was to be conveyed.

"Yes; just deliver that"; and the "Yes, sir," of the servant, and his exit from the room, took place almost simultaneously.

The man spoke as he was desired. Tears at the instant gushed from the eyes of the anxious visitant, and with her breast too full of emotion and her mind too full of dismay to allow of her uttering a word in reply, she turned towards the door, impatient of egress from the house. It was opened for her, and, without a word or a look, she hurried away through the darkness and the rain. The reader knows where she went to. He or she has followed her through the first chapter of this division of our tale, to the house of Moxon, at Paddington, where we left her in a deep swoon.

CHAPTER XVI.

On the morning following these occurrences, the wife of Hartley felt too unwell to rise from the bed that had been assigned to herself and child; and George Moxon, after conducing to her comfort as much as his establishment and good intentions would allow, took his way unbidden to the house of Sir Robert Steel, in Eaton Square.

The baronet was at home, and without knowing the nature of his business, consented to see him. Moxon was ushered into his presence in the library, and having

made a preliminary bow, introduced the subject of his visit. His appearance was not very prepossessing in the eyes of Sir Robert, but being a man of skilful address, and much fluency of speech, he readily succeeding in commanding the attention of that dignified personage. He, the latter, was a short thick set man, with a tallowy complexion, and a surly expression of countenance, with a pair of very round brown eyes, and coarse curly hair matching them in colour. He was in his thirty-ninth year, a bachelor, and fifteen years the senior of Louisa, his only sister.

"I have thought it my duty, Sir Robert," commenced the visitor, "to wait upon and inform you of the circumstances in which your sister, Mrs. Hartley, whose husband is a prisoner for debt in the Queen's Bench, is unfortunately placed in a pecuniary point of view."

Sir Robert was in evident surprise at the nature of his mission; he, however, made no response, but eyed the speaker with a critical severity of aspect, which, however, by no means disturbed the equanimity of Moxon.

"She is now at my house," continued he, "in a state of extreme grief and utter prostration, and, I regret to say, that she is totally without the means of subsistence, owing, as I have said, to the fact of her husband being in the difficulty stated. He is a gentleman of good connexions and education, but no doubt acted rashly in marrying without fortune; still we are all more or less liable to commit these indiscretions, and troubles follow as a natural consequence.

"The particular object that I have in view, is to make you acquainted with the exact condition of the lady, and her infant

son, knowing that you will not allow of a day's delay in relieving her from so unhappy a position."

"What is your address?" asked the baronet, at the conclusion of this address.

Moxon stated it, and the baronet wrote it down as he spoke.

"Have you been instructed by anyone to make this visit?" he inquired.

"No, sir—by no one; I came for the simple purpose of doing good, and I felt that I might be pardoned the liberty, considering that the lady and her child had taken shelter under my roof;" and Moxon held up his head in the confident knowledge that his cause pleaded more eloquently than his language.

"Well, Mr. Moxon," said the baronet, "I'll institute immediate inquiries into this matter; and, although I am not disposed to enter into any details with you of my views

respecting the case in question, I shall nevertheless see that any pecuniary obligation which may have been incurred to you be paid."

"Yes, sir; and shall I act in any way in the matter as respects making any communication to Mrs. Hartley; or arranging a home for her in any way?"

"Not in the least," replied the baronet, rising from his chair and pulling the bell for the servant to open the door, "*I* will make whatever arrangements are necessary."

"May I expect you to call then, sir?" asked the old ex-attorney.

"I will either do that, or otherwise communicate," was the answer.

"To-day?"

"Yes, likely to-day."

"Good morning, Sir Robert," concluded Moxon, bowing out of the room as he spoke.

"Good morning," coldly responded the baronet; and the interview was over.

The one chuckled, the other groaned.

CHAPTER XVII.

Two hours after the departure of Moxon, Sir Robert Steel ordered his brougham, and a little later drove up to the address given by that individual—the two-storied, red-brick house, at Paddington.

The door was opened by Mrs. Baggs, the housekeeper and sole servant, and Moxon was there in the lobby to receive him. He had previously apprised Mrs. Hartley of the expected visit, and she had therefore been anxiously awaiting his arrival in the small front parlour, into which the baronet was now shown.

The brother and sister were soon face to face with each other.

"Well, Louisa, this is a melancholy condition that you have brought yourself to," spoke the baronet.

The grief-oppressed mother burst into tears.

"A very melancholy condition indeed," repeated he. "How are you?" and he took hold of her hand, as with downcast head she sank into a chair weeping.

"Do not reproach me, Robert! Do not reproach me!" she ejaculated, in her sorrow. "I am sufficiently beaten down by the world already;" and she uttered a long deep sigh, that told of her troubled soul.

"Yes!" resumed the brother; "this is the penalty of your evil conduct."

"Evil conduct!" repeated Louisa, raising her head, and fixing her glistening eyes upon him; and with her wan face lighting

up with a hectic flush, "Say rash—say"—(here she wandered in her thoughts, which occasioned a momentary vacant pause), "but don't condemn me as evil."

"Neither do I condemn you, Louisa; I am only telling you that your unhappy position to day is the result of your own improper conduct."

Much more of this sort of conversation followed.

Louisa detailed the circumstances attending her marriage and subsequent life; all of which, however, the brother had been previously made acquainted with through other channels, that of Miss Harker in particular.

"You'd better get into some comfortable lodging, and I'll make you an allowance of two hundred a year," wound up the baronet, with a generosity quite unexpected, and at the same time handing her a check for fifty pounds.

The effect of this announcement upon the mind of Louisa was as a sunbeam breaking through a dark and wintry canopy of cloud. She was cheered by it, but not elated. She was too much bowed down in spirit to exult. She looked at it with a bright eye as a means of procuring bread and shelter for herself and her infant boy, and of relieving the anxieties and comforting the breast of her husband, in this, his season of tribulation. Had necessity not scourged, and grim want not still menaced her, she would have been glad to reject his offer of assistance; but as it was, she mentally clutched it, as the drowning man the straw, and uttered thanks for her temporary deliverance from the early grave that seemed to yawn beneath her, and to whose brink she had been driven by the rude blast of misfortune.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Louisa did not leave the house till the second day following that on which her brother had so seasonably lent his pecuniary aid; her enfeebled frame, and a severe cold, under which she laboured, rendering her for the time being quite unfit to undergo further bodily fatigue. Then, however, she removed with her child to apartments, nearly opposite the Blind Asylum, in Southwark, and commanding a view of "Bedlam" to the right, which Mr. Moxon had chosen for her as

the best that he could find in the vicinity of the Queen's Bench.

There she remained till the period of her husband's restoration to liberty, which event took place five weeks afterwards. Hartley was a much more thoughtful, calculating man, after passing through the ordeal of imprisonment, than he had ever been before.

"I shall do no good if I remain in this country," he observed to his wife. "There is no such thing as employment to be got, and I have not the capital necessary to make such for myself. The only remaining chance for me, that I can see, is to go abroad."

Louisa gazed at him anxiously, and then hung down her head gloomily. "And where to, dear?" she asked, after a short pause in the conversation.

"Well," said he, "I think South America.

It's a fine climate, and Englishmen are scarce, and in demand there, at good salaries, as mercantile clerks, and such like. If I remain in this country for twenty years, I shall be just as poor at the end of that time as I am now. Then" (and his mood became still more thoughtful, and his brow lowered), "if I am compelled to do as I have said, seek my fortune in another country, I do not know that it would be judicious for you to accompany me. It would be probably better for you to stay in England till such time as matters improved, and I came or wrote for you, and this, however painful it might be to either of us. For, after all, the one evil might be preferable to those that might await us, if adrift in the one boat together. Besides, what I could easily bear and buffet with, you, as a tender woman, would sink under; whereas, here in England, you would

know and prepare yourself for the worst—the separation. However, with the help of providence, it should not be for long"; and he leant down, and kissed her, as a tear stole silently down her pale cheek. She sighed, but she did not complain; whatever he might will, she would obey, however bitter to her spirit. She was a dutiful loving wife.

So, in accordance with these expressed views, Hartley looked about him for the means of conveyance—for a ship. He also sought out a comfortable place of residence for his wife and child, and that with a private family inhabiting a villa in the Ordnance Road, St. John's Wood. He finally borrowed fifty pounds from her, and sailed from the port of London, for Rio de Janeiro, with his wife's blessing, instead of her presence, to cheer him on his way.

CHAPTER XIX.

It may not excite the surprise of the reader to learn that a year or two after Montagu Finch had succeeded to the inheritance of the title and estates of his father, and taken up his residence in Portman Square, London, he made the acquaintance of Sir Robert Steel. Sir Montagu's mother, to whose unexpected discovery he now owed his rank and wealth, had died of apoplexy in the mansion referred to a few months after his accession, so that Mabel, his daughter, alone remained, beside the absent

son, of whom nothing was known, to keep him company as kinsfolk on his passage to the grave. And he prided himself upon this his only daughter. She was in her twentieth year when Sir Robert Steel first made the acquaintance of the family, and although neither beautiful, nor of exceeding elegance, or many accomplishments, she succeeded in inspiring the bachelor baronet, who was the least romantic of men, with sentiments which he had never before entertained, or felt, on behalf of any one member of the whole world of womankind. Moreover, her position, with respect to fortune, was in every way equal to his own, and not being himself a rich man, the dowry that would probably accompany her would be of considerable service to him, while the prospect of her becoming the sole heiress to the estates of her father at his decease was still more alluring. And it

was this latter that prompted his desire to marry her. As for love, Sir Robert Steel had ever been a stranger to its influence.

Therefore it was that in the course of events Sir Robert Steel proposed to her father in the most business-like manner imaginable.

"I will submit," responded the latter, "the proposition you have made, Sir Robert, to my daughter, and if it be her choice to accept, you have my perfect concurrence and good wishes; and I trust that it may be a happy event for both of you. Marriage is the most important incident in life, and I should never give my consent to the alliance of a child of mine unless there was every prospect of such being calculated to promote the happiness of both parties."

The result of Sir Robert Steel's offer to Miss Finch was, that he was accepted.

CHAPTER XX.

Let us follow the adventurous Hartley to Brazil, where he arrived four months after his departure from London and his wife. He landed at about six o'clock in the evening, on the 24th October, 1848, in front of the Palace Square and hotel Pharoux, at Rio. The novelty of the scene before him, so foreign to anything that had before met his untravelled eye, filled him with sensations of little less than delight. The magnificent scenery, embracing the picturesque and straggling city of Rio and its lengthy

suburbs; the broad waters of the bay, studded here and there with beautiful islets, and bounded, far away in the distance, by the mighty Organ mountains; the church crowned elevations; the white houses, built in the old Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese style of architecture; together with the numerous negro slaves, and the various complexions of the people; all conspired to enhance the novelty, quicken his pulsation, and make jubilant his heart.

He entered Rio a bold man. Taking his way into the Rua Direita, the principal street of Rio, leading out of the upper end of the square, the first conspicuous object that met his gaze was a funeral procession. It consisted of a long line of chaises, followed by twenty horsemen, each carrying a lighted candle. An elegant coach and four came next in order, guided by a charioteer in light livery, and through either

end of which vehicle projected one end of a coffin. Carriages of every description followed; some with outriders, and others with negroes in livery perched up behind. The procession wound up with a coach and four, with attendants in white and scarlet costumes, the driver and footmen appertaining to which were arrayed in three cornered, red-feathered hats, that hung over them, each like an extinguisher over a candle.

Hartley was surprised at the lateness of the hour chosen for a funeral; but he soon afterwards ascertained that in Rio all such took place in the evening.

Indifferent as to where he went, and curious to see more of the ceremony, he walked on with it to the Paula Church, at the upper extremity of the Rua Ouvidor, where the interment was to take place, and which he entered a little in advance of the procession.

The edifice alluded to was built of stone, plastered over in the prevailing Portuguese style, and relieved on either side by poor looking dwelling houses. Two square towers supported the central part, the peaked pediment of which was surmounted with a huge bronze cross. The tower ran up a story higher, and each terminated in a dome, tapering upwards and crowned with a brazen chanticleer. The interior was a long and lofty apartment, very airy, and clear of floor incumbrances, such as aisles, columns, and pews. Light was admitted at the sides, near the arched and richly carved roof, through semicircular windows, also through the street doors, and at three windows over them. The farther end was wholly taken up with the high altar, which, illuminated with the light of many burning candles, shone in all its splendour. Elevated above the candles,

stood a figure of the saint, in the character of a monk.

Three other shrines occupied places on each side of the building, with their life-sized images. Thus there were in all seven altars, where as many different saints could be invoked by those who were fools enough to believe in them; and these were many.

The only sign of a funeral previous to the entry of the coffin of the deceased, was a sarcophagus looking stand, fitted in the centre of the floor. Four feet or so from it, on either side, stood a row of nine gilt candlesticks, of classic patterns, five feet in height and very massive, with candles to correspond. These were burning. About twenty people walked and knelt about, in attitudes as various as their complexions. Negroes were bringing in large trays of giant candles, which they piled near the door.

Very soon a number of gentlemen entered, and, together with those already in, Hartley not excepted, ranged themselves in triple lines on either side of the way from the chief entrance to the grand altar. Burning tapers, three feet long, were at the same time handed to each of them, and these were inclined forward in order to prevent the swealing wax from descending to the hands of the holders.

Immediately following this filing off, the officiating priest entered the building, followed by others bearing the coffin, which they at once placed on the sarcophagus looking stand alluded to. The coffin was of the same width and depth throughout, and so shallow, that the face, folded hands, and feet of the corpse appeared above the edge, when the peaked dog-kennel-roofed lid was lifted. The lid in question consisted of two boards,

meeting down the centre at an angle, and hinged at both sides, so that either one or both halves could be thrown back. No sooner was the coffin placed on the stand, than these folding lids were lifted as described; after which, a band of priests walked round it, chanting, swinging censers, and sprinkling the corpse.

It may be well to here mention, that the cemeteries of Rio adjoin the rear or sides of their respective churches, and are not visible to the public eye from any of the streets. The dead are not interred in graves, nor buried under ground, but placed in niches arranged in three tiers round the four high walls of a quadrangular area, which has a continuous shed or roof projecting inward, leaving a central place open to the sky, and usually occupied by a few marble tomb stones. The niches for the dead—who are entombed in the

clothes they wore while living, and commonly without coffins—are a little more than six feet long, by two and a half broad, eighteen inches high at the mouth, and two feet in the middle, the roof forming a low arch. All are whitewashed, while those occupied have their fronts bricked up and plastered over. Beyond having each a number, they bear no inscriptions.

From the sarcophagus-looking stand, the coffin, with its inmate clad in holiday garb, was carried into the quadrangular area of the church, and there placed on a temporary platform close to a niche in the middle tier, into which it was slid with the covers open. A handkerchief was then spread over the face of the deceased by one of his friends, and priests and people stepped up one at a time, and with a silver sprinkler, handed by the sacristan,

each threw holy water on the body, as also emptied over the same a small scoop of powdered quick lime, which an attendant held in readiness for the purpose.

More than a bushel of lime was thus disposed of, by which time the body was totally concealed by it. Following this, a priest used the silver sprinkler once more; and having poured something out of a small perforated box, the church ceremonies were over. This was the signal for the candle bearers to extinguish their lights, and hand them to the appointed attendants.

All was not yet over, however; a friend of the departed produced a paper, from which he read an eulogy that lasted nearly half-an-hour. Two other similar orations followed, at the close of which the coffin lids were closed and padlocked, the key being handed to a relative of the defunct one.

Thus closed the interesting rites. In a few minutes afterwards the niche was bricked up, and covered with a coat of white plaster.

In this mode of inhumation nothing approaching corruption takes place. The lime consumes the flesh, and in two years after interment the bones are invariably taken out and placed in a rosewood or marble urn, or still more commonly burned, the ashes, however, being always preserved in some similar receptacle. As the niches are thus vacated, so are they re-white-washed and ready for other occupants.

What a comfortable prospect it must be for Brazilians to look forward during life to being placed high and dry in these secluded ovens, there to be quietly burned up with lime; and how much better than being consigned to the cold, damp ground, with a lot of greedy worms to gnaw at their vitals.

What a prospect for you and I, reader! For my own part I would prefer being burned up in my regimentals, and converted into a good, dry skeleton.

It is a melancholy reflection that novel writers and novel readers, alike with the cattle on a thousand hills, must some day look grim in death; and the knowledge that I must die makes me, although I dread it not, almost sorry that I was ever born.

Melmoth Hartley felt inclined to shave his head and weep, so much were his before buoyant spirits affected by being thus brought face to face with a gentleman who had "gone to kingdom come;" and he took his way into the Rua d'Ouvidor, and so on to the hotel Pharoux, in a very reflective mood indeed. He speculated within himself as to whether he should live to reach England again, or whether Louisa and his child would live to meet him elsewhere.

"When shall we three meet again?" was the question which he put to himself, and his spirits waxed so low that he muttered to himself, "Well, after all, there's not much in life worth living for. It's a continual battle; and what do we fight for after all? money, baubles, chaff. Inglorious strife! which wears out the machinery of life far quicker than nature ever intended it to be, and leaves us at the last the mere prey of worms. Poor, helpless man! that prideth himself upon so much; but hath so little to exalt him that, stripped of his conventional encumbrances, is so much more insignificant a thing than in his vanity he esteems himself. Alas! humanity. Would that I had the wings of a dove to flee away."

"What'll you take, bottled beer or brandy?" were the words that at this stage of his reflections suddenly broke upon his sense of hearing as he entered the hotel.

It was owing to the circumstance of two Yankee skippers being there drinking together. They were evidently of the earth, but it would have been difficult to tell where in the realms of imagination Hartley had just then soared to.

CHAPTER XXI.

On the following morning—Sunday—he strolled out at seven o'clock, to *see life.*

The streets were alive with chocolate coloured men and women, with carts, ox-teams, and pannier mules; together with gangs of rattle-shaking, chanting slaves, bearing their burdens at a willing trot. Paviors, carpenters, coopers, and tinmen were busy at their respective occupations. Smiths too were at their forges, and tailors and tailors' boys were seated, as usual, on their stools. Slabs of jerked beef hung out

at some doors, and dry goods fluttered at others.

By a stream of insignificant size, oozing out of some rocks on the Gloria beach, a *lavendeira* was scrubbing shirts, and spreading them over a patch of grass to dry. Men and mules were cooling themselves just within the surf. A little further on three or four negroes were coming ashore with each the end of a seine.

Noisy crowds of dusky slaves were pushing forward their *barils* to the spouts at a neighbouring fountain.

He turned up to the Gloria Church, where, on a point jutting into the bay, and several feet above it, the prospect was delightful. Far down in the valley he gazed upon groves of mangoes, stately palms, and broad leaved bananas. Nearer, evanescent rays of green and gold flashed from the breasts of humming birds, while butterflies

flapped their many tinted wings in lazy flight.

The door of the crumbling old church stood open; so he entered, passing at the door two hollowed marble basins of holy water and an alms box. As he advanced towards the centre of the building, a pulpit projected before him from either wall, right and left. Further on, he stopped in front of a couple of shrines, facing each other, and furnished each with a life-sized image. The one was Emygdio, draped as a monk, and celebrated for protecting people from earthquakes; the other Gonçalo, the great patron of maids and bachelors. After these came the grand altar, surmounted by a life-size figure of the lady of the place, *Nossa Senhora da Gloria*, fashionably draped in silks and frills, and with rings on her fingers. The walls of the church were lined for eight feet from the ground with blue and

white Dutch tiles, representing landscapes and mythological characters. Actæon and others were starting and coursing game, and Cupid was there also, flinging his arrows in a very energetic manner indeed.

All the columns, niches, altars, candlesticks, and carved work, were in white and gold, which contrasted well with the blue pagan scenery on the walls. The sacristan came in and led him by desire into the vestry, the walls of which were also tiled. Portraits of some of the fathers hung on them, together with one, the largest, representing a man in a blue coat, and white breeches, kneeling, but with a stout angel assisting him to rise; a lady on horseback was fast approaching him from below, and a female head was smiling upon him through an opening in the clouds.

What did all this mean? he turned round to the sacristan, and harangued

him in a mingling of bad Spanish and worse Portuguese.

It was this:—The first wife of Pedro I. had much devotion to the lady of Gloria, and named her daughter, subsequently Queen of Portugal, after her.

Pedro came with her one morning to mass—both on horseback. On coming up the hill, his horse stumbled, and fell, and down went Pedro. His wife at once called on Nossa Senhora to save him, harmless, and instantly to rise. Fortunately, her wish was gratified, but more on account of Pedro's own agility, than in consequence of the holy lady's interference. However, the wife considered that Nossa Senhora had much to do with it, and that a miracle had been performed, in commemoration of which this picture was painted.

"Shocking superstition!" ejaculated Hartley. After which, he went home to

his breakfast,—a very sensible mode of procedure indeed.

As he emerged within view of the broad waters of Rio's magnificent bay, he saw passage boats under a press of sail, coursing to and fro in every direction: the naked negro toiling at his oar; the dusky soldier in his gay costume, lounging in his curtained barge, and wreathed in the smoke of his cigar; the tattooed slave paddling his rude canoe; the barges of the men of war with feathered oars shooting from point to point, while the larger vessels sat majestically on the sparkling tide, with their flags and pennants fluttering proudly in the breeze. And he gazed upon the sullen forts, and castles, and the gay palace, and the lovely church-crowned hills, and the grand old mountains, and the graceful nodding of here and there a palm tree; and all looked *riant* to the eye beneath a

flashing sky, through which blazed the bright orb of day, whose rays lighted up the earth in a brilliant array, and made every living thing disport in the gladness of its existence.

"Hail! festive season," exclaimed our adventurer; "in thee I take delight."

CHAPTER XXII.

Hartley found but little difficulty in procuring immediate employment, and that in the counting house of an English merchant.

Month succeeded month after this, during which time he wrote several letters to his wife; but in none of which he invited her to join him beneath the glowing sky of Brazil; and this was as much owing to the uncertainty of his remaining there as to the objection he entertained to her travelling so great a distance alone. He contemplated returning to England as soon as his means

would allow him, then to return again with the mother and the boy; and this intention he did not neglect to mention in his epistles home.

He had received one letter from her since his arrival, which had been written two months after his departure from England, and addressed, according to prearrangement, "*Post Office, Rio de Janeiro. To be called for.*" In which all was stated to be going on as well as the mournfulness of his absence would allow; but it was not till month had again succeeded month, and April had arrived, that he received one in acknowledgment of the first of his letters from Rio. All was still well, and both wife and child were still at the villa in the Ordnance Road.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was Palm Sunday at Rio. Bright and vivifying was the day. All nature looked glad and festive, and *riant* was the prospect that everywhere met the gaze of the jubilant multitude.

Freemen and bondsmen, women and children were alike happy; and gaily laughed and chatted together the people of the granite city.

Hartley walked out to observe the customs of the time.

The streets, alike with any ordinary day,

presented a busy aspect. Itinerant vendors of bread and jewelry, fresh butcher's meat, and books, religious and otherwise, vegetables and sweetmeats, and a hundred things beside, moved about in all directions, shouting loudly as they went. The slaves, barefooted and half naked; the bright and picturesque turbans of the women relieving the monotonous blackness of the men; while the freemen invariably wore "shoes and neckcloths," such being the conventional marks of distinction, and the luxuries by law prohibited to those in bondage.

People were walking about with tall tufted stems of the palm in their hands, or with such carried by their servants following them. Where ladies were the pedestrians, bouquets tastefully crowned the upper ends of the branches. Negroes were making palm trumpets by coiling palm leaves; and negresses were offering them for sale.

Soldiers were standing at the door of the Imperial chapel, and priests within were dispensing holy-water-sprinkled palm leaves in exchange for money.

Two rows of halberdiers formed a passage along the middle of the floor, through which the bishop, followed by his train bearers, passed to the great altar, in front of which twelve poor men were seated on a bench, waiting to have their feet washed, which service that high ecclesiastical functionary performed soon afterwards, and no doubt to their complete satisfaction.

It was the day of the procession of the Carmelites in Rio. The hour was four o'clock in the afternoon.

The balconies of the houses were filled with ladies in full dress, while the side walks were crowded with patient masses of spectators, eager for the approach of a promised spectacle.

The evening was fine, and the air, although balmy, by no means oppressive.

A procession, lengthening as it advanced, emerged from the Carmo Temple; infantry soldiers formed into ranks along either side of the way, and the crowd of observers thickened.

First in the order of procession, horse soldiers, with drawn swords, rode three abreast; then followed a banner, bearing the inscription S. P. Q. R.; then was borne aloft, on a silver pole, a crimson bag, with a black mourning candle on each side; then the brotherhood, in their uniform of cream-coloured albs, and armed with waxen staffs; and here and there, with winged cherubs clutched in hand; then three young ladies abreast, acting the part of angels, the centre one, with uplifted banner, personating St. Michael, the archangel, and wearing a shining helmet, a

silver breast-plate, nankeen pantelettes, and scarlet boots, as also a pair of spotted wings, surmounted by a paper-lace representation of clouds, large ear-rings, bracelets, finger-rings, and necklace, and a conspicuous pair of bare arms. After these was borne a large statue of Christ, in a kneeling posture, with the hands clasped, as in prayer, while drops of blood rolled down the pallid cheeks, and an angel, four feet high, in a stooping posture, was depicted in the act of presenting the cup. It represented the Passion. Three silver lanterns were borne on each side, and a file of soldiers, with drawn swords, rode in attendance. As it passed the troops that lined either side of the way, they fixed bayonets, and shouldered muskets in its honour. Another long line of brothers followed in its rear.

These were succeeded by another repre-

sentation of *Christ before Pilate* — pale, emaciated, and submissive. Then came more brothers, and more angels, three abreast; then *Christ, scourged*—naked, save a girdle round the loins; this image was tied by ropes to a pillar, and the face, breast, back, thighs, arms, and legs, were painted as streaming with gore.

Again, there followed brothers and angels; then, *Christ mocked*, in a sitting posture, with a reed in his hand, and a short purple robe thrown over his lacerated shoulders, the rest of his body being bruised and bleeding.

There was another troop of brothers and angels. Then came a stage, on which *Christ before Herod* was represented in a standing posture, with a stalk of sugar cane grasped in one hand.

More brothers and angels followed, and these were succeeded by *Christ bearing the*

cross, which was about as horrible to behold, as the agony conveyed in the expression of the face was intense. Many knelt as the latter passed them. Another batch of angels came next in order, and then *Christ on the cross*. Brothers and angels again, and behind them a couple of negroes, with boxes of bon-bons to refresh them during pauses in the procession. Then, under a long canopy, came the managers—priests with their heads covered with skull caps, rochets, and mitres, and so constituting exceptions to their bare headed predecessors, as also to the spectators and the soldiery. Both the latter prostrated themselves *en masse* as they passed along. A military band, playing a lively air, succeeded them; the foot soldiers that had been lining the way, wheeled in as a guard of honour to the *padres*, while a little way behind, and

closing the procession, moved the bearers of the national banner. And Hartley gazed upon all this pomp, and said, "Verily all is vanity."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Months more elapsed, and there came another letter from Louisa. In it there occurred this passage:—"I have news for you, dear. I have made a new friend, through my brother, and am now staying as a guest and companion with the daughter of Sir Montagu Finch, in Portman Square; and what do you think? she is to be married to him on the 24th of next month. Only fancy that, dear Melmoth. She is very rich, and she is an only daughter; an only child I might say, for her brother—

and she had only one—has not been heard of for years, and is supposed to be dead; so that, in all likelihood, she will be a very rich heiress, Sir Montagu's estates being very large. I hope, love, you will not be angry with me for leaving the villa. Our dear boy looks so happy—the little darling, and so like his *pa-pa*. Sir Montagu is very kind, and so is Mabel, sweet creature; I quite love her, she is so good and amiable in everything."

"Montagu Finch!" ejaculated Hartley, on perusing what we have just read; and the expression of his countenance was full of wonder and excitement. "And Mabel, too," he continued, thinking of his father and his sister, who bore those names.

"Strange, if true — very strange," he observed, in answer to his own thoughts, and a cold sweat gathered upon his brow. He sank, half bewildered, into a chair, and

gave way to a flood of thought. "Truly fact is stranger than fiction," was his exclamation; for he instinctively believed that the parties alluded to must be those whom he had last left behind within the walls of Chester. The allusion made to himself, as the long lost brother of Mabel, convinced him that it was, that it could be no other, than *her*, than *him*—his sister—his father—who were in that letter alluded to.

His excitement and impatience quickened for a while, and then he settled down into a calm contemplation of the fact—of the change which fortune had effected in the financial condition of his father. What great deed had he done to be so soon rewarded with a baronetcy? Was the whole thing an imposition? Did he dream? Had his wife ascertained the truth as to his family, and was she playing upon his

credulity? Never! No—it could not be. Had his father suddenly come into an inheritance of a title and estates of which he had no previous knowledge or expectation? He suddenly remembered that a cloud had hung over the records and existence of his ancestors. "Ah! here then is the mystery solved. Some discovery has been made! Some unlooked-for event has occurred!" and after thus soliloquising, he resolved to leave Rio and Brazil, and journey towards England, and its metropolis, at the first available moment.

CHAPTER XXV.

Hartley had amassed sufficient money to procure himself a passage to the desired land. He might have travelled by steamer, but the difference in expense between that and a sailing vessel induced him to choose the latter in preference.

The vessel by which he resolved to voyage was a Sunderland brig, laden almost entirely with Brazil wood, and bound for Liverpool, and he was the only passenger on board. She sailed.

They had been at sea nearly three months,

and were in latitude fifty degrees north, and longitude thirty degrees west, when they encountered a heavy gale from the east, with a high rolling sea, which necessitated a clearing of the decks and a double-reefed topsail, and still later compelled the vessel to be hove to, in which condition she was tossed about like a feather on the foam.

A few hours afterwards, it was discovered that she was leaking considerably, and the circumstance of her shipping a sea that capsized and stove to pieces the longboat and the life-boat, which lay within it, forcing both from the lee-rail overboard, only tended to make matters worse.

All hands but three were put to the pumps, and all night long through the dreary hours of darkness did the stalwart fellows toil—Hartley among their number.

It was in the month of December, and

occasional showers of hail were driven furiously down upon the storm-tossed brig. Between these showers the pale beauty of the wan moon, now and again, with a spectral light, pierced the tissue of fleecy clouds that drifted across the wild and watery sky, and tipped the crest-foam of the raging billows with a wavy, tremulous light.

A little before daylight on the following morning, the plunging vessel shipped another tremendous sea, which carried away the port bulwarks and stanchions, split the covering board, swept away the cook house, tore the lifeboat from the deck, where it had been lashed, and rushing farther aft, bore off in triumph the companion and the steerage wheel, leaving the steersman sprawling on the deck in a flood of water. The small boat, hanging at the starboard davits, was also carried away, together with a large portion of the standing and running

gear. Nearly all the sails were at the same moment blown from the yards. The men at the pumps jumped for their lives, and when the water cleared off they found themselves jammed into corners about the deck. The sea swept as high as the main top, and Hartley was carried with it, and was only saved by being thrown against and clutching the rigging. The water ran into the cabin, stove the bulkheads, and flooded the bread-room, destroying all that it contained save one barrel of biscuits that happened to be stowed away in a locker. The cabin stairs were carried away, and everything was torn up that impeded the course of the maddened waves.

Sea after sea subsequently broke over the crippled, labouring vessel, by one of which a man was carried overboard and lost.

The storm raged with unabated violence

all that day; the crew meanwhile working at the pumps, and preventing themselves from being swept overboard into the yawning gulf by clinging to the vessel whenever the seas broke over her.

At about nine o'clock on the succeeding night the pumps were utterly disabled by a heavy sea. After this last calamity the storm gradually moderated; but the water gained on the vessel; and a little after midnight thirteen feet of water washed about in the hold.

Seeing that their only hope lay in keeping the water down by pumping, they commenced to repair the broken machinery, and so far succeeded that by noon on the next day the pump gear was in working order, and the vessel free.

After this they cleared away the wreck as much as possible, and tried to spread some canvass to steady her. They also made

a tiller, by which they were able to work her with tolerable efficiency. At eight o'clock on the following night the wind and the waves rose and assailed the vessel with even greater fury than before, driving the men from the pumps, and dashing the sea over her both fore and aft. The gale, with terrific force, wildly swept the troubled Atlantic till the dawn of another day, by which time the depth of water had so increased that it flooded the cabin floor; and in this cabin all on board sought shelter from the weather, and the risk of being washed overboard, as the bulwarks had all been torn away; but as sea after sea swept over and filled the cabin, those there collected had to run from it and get into a small forecastle house, built in with the rise of the keep, about three feet above the deck. They took with them their sole provision, a bag containing thirty or forty

pounds of biscuit. They were without water. In the deck house they found a cask of salt beef; but this was but sorry food for thirsty men with no promise of drink.

Days elapsed, the storm continued, and still the wretched men lingered together in the place denoted — their only retreat. Then, however, to increase their misfortunes, the bulkheads of the deck house were knocked down, and the water obtained free access, and washed through it at every lurch of the floating wreck. The brig was now completely water-logged, and would have sunk had she not been loaded with timber.

Day succeeded day for a week after this, and still there came no help—no succour to the famine stricken crew. Fortunately for them it rained frequently during that melancholy time, and by putting their mouths to the masts, and licking off the water as it trickled

down them, the burning fever of their thirst, although not satisfied, was in part allayed. Their sufferings were intense, too much so for description. The salt meat, eaten raw, created a fever and inflammation, which induced a more burning and painful thirst than otherwise would have been experienced.

On the eighth day after their seeking refuge in the deck house, two of their number, who had drank sea water, became deranged, in other words, grew raving mad. One of these died, and was thrown overboard, the other jumped into the sea in a frantic state, not knowing what he was doing. After reaching the water he made a desperate effort to cling to the side of the vessel, and two of the survivors on board laid hold of his hands to pull him back again, but he finally broke from them and was drowned.

On the day following another of their number was washed into the cabin and drowned there. The rest lived on as they best could. Their stock of biscuit became exhausted soon after this, and they had nothing to eat but raw salt meat.

Two more seamen died in a state of delirium three days after those just mentioned. A sail was seen coursing along the horizon, but it passed away without a nearer approach. Six men and a boy, besides Hartley, and the captain, now only remained as living witnesses of the wreck.

The lights of another vessel were seen at a distance of about a mile, on the night following the death of these men, but not a light flickered on the wreck, and it was passed unobserved.

Morning again broke across the still stormy prospect; for throughout the wind had blown, and the sea had rolled heavily,

and without intermission. Finally, the salt meat failed them, and they turned wistful eyes towards the two dead bodies that still lay on board, the latter having been delayed committal to the deep, with a view to ulterior purposes, in the event of a sufficient emergency arising.

For twenty-four hours after the consumption of the last of that salt beef, did hunger gnaw within the nine emaciated survivors, before one of them even spoke of making food of the dead men; but when nature could no longer support them through the fearful ordeal, and when they felt that it was a matter of either life or death, they resolved among themselves to obey the dictates of appetite; and with dishevelled hair and wild looking bloodshot eyes, they plunged their knives into one of those bodies which they had dragged to the door of the deck-house; and they there

ravenously devoured its cold flesh, gulping it down without mastication, and regarding each other with fierce, fiery, and maddened looks, in which the brute faculty predominated, and that rendered them ghastly impersonations of the diabolical in man. But they were to be pitied rather than condemned. Their condition was fearful, and they were all more or less on the brink of insanity. Their circumstances were such, that anything they might have done was pardonable.

There is no tribunal in heaven or earth to judge men for deeds done at such a time and in such a state. God help them.

Two of the seamen died soon after this repletion, upon which the boy, whom we have mentioned, plunged his knife into the dead man's arm, with the view of bleeding him, for the sake of drinking his blood:—but no blood came.

It was while matters continued in this state that a sail was observed to be bearing down upon the wreck. On came the ship, careering proudly o'er the wave. Nearer and nearer it approached the half glazed, anxious eyes of the shipwrecked men—the cannibals by necessity—as they clung to the foremast, rejoicing together in the prospect of deliverance.

No sooner was the ship within speaking distance than a hearty cheer rose up from those on board, which was responded to by those on the wreck in the faintest manner imaginable. It was not heard at all by those on board the other vessel; but Hartley waved his handkerchief, dyed with the gore of dead men, in token of welcome. Their throats were too much parched to allow of their even speaking, for water they had not tasted for forty hours.

It was still blowing hard with a high sea

running, as the mate of the strange ship, with a crew, came alongside the wreck in a boat. Hartley alone could stand of the seven survivors; the rest had to be carried into the boat, and raised into the ship by means of a painter's chair and ropes; a task of considerable difficulty in such stormy weather.

The ship of their rescue turned out to be on her voyage from Philadelphia to Liverpool, with passengers and cargo.

Hartley soon told the melancholy tale of disaster, omitting only the anthropophagic, or man-eating feature of the wretched scene; but with this those who went on board to carry them away were familiar, from having seen four mangled bodies lying about the deck; as also from the confessions of the boy survivor on that point. And this became mooted rather than talked about on board the ship, and excited a feeling

of the most painful interest, not to say horror.

Two of the rescued seamen died within three days after their removal from the wreck; but the remaining five gradually recovered their strength. Hartley, however, was by far the most forward in convalescence, even as he had endured the privations of the wreck with less exhaustion to himself than had any of the others; so that by the time he reached the Mersey, twenty-five days after leaving the brig, he showed but slight signs of the dreadful ordeal through which he had passed. Owing to the long starvation, his appetite was little less than ravenous; and so, with a good digestion, and the knowledge that although he had lost his luggage he had saved his money, his health became vigorous and his body flourished. He, alike with his companions in deliverance, lavished his gratitude upon

those who had not only saved his life, but cherished it afterwards to the extreme of their ability; and he parted with a sincere benediction upon all with whom he had journeyed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The destined shore was reached: he hailed it with delight. From Liverpool he proceeded at once to London, and the house in Portman Square.

"Is Mrs. Hartley within?" he inquired of the footman, who opened the door in answer to his ring of the bell.

"Yes, sir!" was the response; and in walked the hero of the wreck. "If you'll give me your card, sir, I'll take it up," said the servant.

Hartley had no card.

"Say Mr. Hartley," was his substitute. The man stared for an instant, answered—"Yes, sir!" and departed on his errand to the drawing room, where Sir Montagu Finch and Mrs. Hartley were just then seated, in company with her brother and his wife, for the latter had been married on the day named by Louisa in her letter.

The surprise of the party may be readily imagined when the presence of Mr. Hartley was announced; and as the latter had never written to apprize his wife of his intended departure from Brazil, by the vessel in which he sailed; in fact, had not written at all after the receipt of the letter which impelled him hither, she was even more amazed than the rest of the party.

"Can it be him?" she ejaculated. "Surely not!" and she hurried out of the room into the presence of the visitor, and there flung herself into his embrace.

The first warmth of the fond greeting over—the first throbbing of the replenished fire of love passed away—the delighted, the exultant wife led him into the drawing room.

He followed, without question, and suddenly and unexpectedly found himself face to face with—ah, there was no mistaking them—HIS FATHER AND HIS SISTER, with his austere brother-in-law frowning darkly in the back ground. He shrank from the steady gaze of his parent; he was agitated by the look of amazement and alarm of Mabel. He was for the moment embarrassed, speechless, dismayed, but quickly he recovered himself. Just then Mabel fainted, the strength forsook his own limbs, and he sank on to a sofa, incapable of either word, look, or action. He wished Sir Robert Steel at Jerusalem, anywhere but as a spectator in this room,

at this moment. The *scene* pained him more than he could well tell, and he lacked, unfortunately, the moral courage to face the brunt of so strange an interview, and to ask the forgiveness of, and go through the form of reconcilition with, an aggrieved father.

The latter was amazed, confounded, and he stood in dumb astonishment, scarcely crediting his own senses in the belief that he beheld—that before his vision breathed no other than the lost one—than Caleb, his only son.

Caleb, although even more affected, was prepared, by anticipation, for such a discovery as the present; but not at all so for such an embarrassing scene.

Louisa, although her attention was diverted in behalf of Lady Steel, did not fail to remark, in the midst of all her excitement, the strange nervous manner and look

of Sir Montagu towards her husband. She saw that, although dumb, there was a scene being enacted between them. There was recognition in their eyes, and every feature of both was convulsed with emotion. What could it be? she uttered a shriek at, she knew not what.

Sir Robert Steel was attending to his wife. The bell had been rung, and a footman appeared in answer to the summons. Hartley was the first to speak, and in the midst of the disorder, he ejaculated in tremulous accents.

"Forgive me, father! I am Caleb."

A tear at that instant burst from the old man's eye, and coursed quickly down his furrowed cheek; while, as if instinctively, the two men advanced towards each other, and hand clasped in hand, leant breast to breast. There was a momentous pause, a general turning aside to look with wonder-

ing eyes and much amazement, at the reconciliation of THE FATHER AND THE SON.

That scene baffles language to pourtray.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Sir Robert Steel was sore vexed at this unlooked for turn-up of an heir to the estates of his father-in-law, whose entire fortune he had expected to descend to his wife. He had given up all idea of ever hearing of that wife's brother being still in the land of the living, and he was mentally plotting the old gentleman's death by small doses of strychnine, in order to make sure of matters, as he said within himself, just as this only son entered his father's presence.

The prospects which the baronet in his wickedness had entertained were now blighted. There was now no object to be gained by poisoning old Finch, and it was very doubtful whether any attempt to dispose by similar means of young Finch would be successful. At any rate he was more in fear of the gallows when he conned it over than he had been while plotting the death of the former.

Of course all these evil thoughts, which rendered him so diabolical among men, had their source in his love of money—that love from whence arises four-fifths of the crime enacted among civilised mankind, and which is itself the great fountain of human misery and evil motives, the cold barrier that sheds its ungenial, interposing influence between every one of us, and those by whom we are surrounded. A baser passion than the love of money does not exist. And it was this

passion that actuated the sordid breast of Sir Robert Steel. With him the daughter of the elder Finch was in as much danger as a rabbit thrust into the cage of a serpent.

He proposed insuring her life.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Sir Montagu Finch freely invited his son to make his home at the house in Portman Square, and proposed to allow him four hundred a year.

Caleb willingly availed himself of these offers, and accordingly took up his abode as suggested; and found the allowance per annum very acceptable in his poverty.

As might be expected, the wife of Caleb was as much astounded by finding that he and the much talked of son of Sir Montagu were one and the same person, as

the latter had been; and, as a matter of course, he had much to explain, more particularly to herself. However, their love was none the less in consequence of his adventures, mishaps, and discovery, and he consoled himself with the knowledge that, "*All's well that ends well*," and flattered himself accordingly.

In recounting the story of his voyage home from Rio, he, with becoming delicacy, omitted the man-eating incident; he had no ambition to be esteemed one of the anthropophagi, and he looked back with a feeling akin to horror on that the most painful episode in his career.

"There's no knowing what we may be driven to," were his words of soliloquy. "Hunger makes us acquainted with strange dishes."

CHAPTER XXIX.

A LITTLE more than two years after the reconciliation, Sir Montagu Finch lay on his bed in the house in Portman Square, dying.

His son and his daughter, his son's wife and his daughter's husband, were present in the chamber where he lay.

The blinds were pulled up and the curtains were drawn back, for the sick man wanted light—"more light," was his expression. People on the verge of death commonly feel a similar desire for a strong light in their apartment.

It is ever an affecting incident to stand by the bedside of a conscious dying man, or a conscious dying woman, of education and intelligence, and witness the surrender of LIFE to DEATH; to watch the last agonizing glance of the expiring one; or the melancholy look of silent resignation, as the case may be; to see the last spark of a bright intelligence extinguished for ever; all the lustre of the mind dimmed with the last beat of the pulse and the filming of the eye, never again to flash or burn with the rays of a polished intellect.

There is something more touching in all this than in the death of a child, or of those who have through life worked their bodies rather than their heads, whose temperament has not been intellectual, whose refinement was never great.

The susceptible faculties of the uneducated labourer—of the man not given to

intellectual pursuits—are much less keen than are those of the man whose tastes and opportunities have been of a higher order. The more refined and studious and thoughtful a man of literary tastes or poetical temperament becomes, so much the more capable is he of deep, impassioned feeling; so much the more intensely can he experience the extremes of joy and misery; so much more holier is he than other men; so much more warmed and actuated by generous impulses and the higher motives of the human mind. Consequently, such a man's grief, the pain of such a man's regret, would far exceed that of the more sordid, that of those moved by baser passions and less trained by culture and the associations of a fastidious life, removed above the vulgar. And so, to some extent, did the expiring baronet feel regret at parting from the world, his children, his grandchildren, his worldly wealth, and unharassed life.

He had none of those inducements to hail death as a happy deliverance from a world whose influence had been ever barren to him of good fruits, and from a body which had experienced nothing save toil, hardship, and persecution. With him fortune had been propitious; even happiness, during his latter years, had attended him; and he lacked nothing save health. But how much he lacked in lacking that! He would now, as the last breath ebbed from his body, have surrendered all beside in its favour; for of what avail was aught beside to him. Vain thought, however; tenacity of life will never stay the relentless hand of greedy death; and once within the vortex, all is over.

Sir Montagu Finch was an old man, and he was correspondingly tenacious of existence. He dreaded the fall into the unknown fathomless abyss that yawned beneath him.

Heaven and *hell* dazzled his feeble imagination, and conflicting thoughts raged within his troubled soul and beat wildly against his conscience, as roaring billows maddened by the stern resistance of unyielding rocks.

"Oh! God!" he ejaculated, and expired with a gasp. His spirit took wing, and left, cold and motionless, the clay that it had so long tenanted, and guided, and impelled through life.

His daughter threw herself upon his corse in weeping agony and hysterical emotion. Caleb turned away and shed tears with a heaving breast, and his faithful wife, laying her head against his broad chest, bitterly shared his grief. Sir Robert Steel alone was impassive and unchanged. He stood looking out of the window into the square, thinking of the "last will and testament" of the deceased; and wondering,

now that it was all over, how much had been left to the daughter, of whom he was the unworthy husband.

Let us here, over the chamber of death, let fall the curtain.

CHAPTER XXX.

Thirty thousand pounds was the amount bequeathed by Sir Montagu Finch to his daughter. She was as yet childless, but in the event of her having any children, it was willed to be equally divided among them at her decease; consequently, the interest of the same, in the meantime, only accrued to her. If, however, there was no issue of the marriage, the legacy was to descend to her husband, should he survive her death; otherwise the sum bequeathed was left entirely at her own disposal.

Such were the terms of the last will and testament of the late baronet, so far as concerned his daughter.

To Caleb he bequeathed his entire landed estate, forty thousand pounds in the funds, sixty thousand pounds in various other securities, and all his personal effects. To his servants he left appropriate gifts of money, varying from one to six hundred pounds. To several hospitals, and other public charities, he left in all fifteen thousand pounds.

Sir Robert Steel gnashed his teeth when he found that a sum so much smaller than he had anticipated had fallen to the lot of his wife, and he did little less than curse her dead father, for what he considered the scanty award. But he uttered no word of complaint to the orphan concerned, and continued to go as regularly to church as he had ever done, and he invariably went

twice every Sabbath; and those who knew him thought him a model of excellence. The fact, however, was, that Sir Robert Steel had a mind so depraved that he was capable of doing anything—no matter how diabolical it might be—so that it served his own base purpose he had no care for aught beyond. No amount of human misery would have dismayed or deterred him from the committal of any wickedness that it might have been his wish to accomplish. He would have become murderer, forger, or calumniator, with equal facility and callousness. Yet he paid his pew rent regularly, and was on friendly terms with the incumbent of the neighbouring church.

Since the return of Caleb he had discontinued the allowance of two hundred a year to his sister, and he felt much happier in consequence.

We have said, that soon after his mar-

riage he proposed insuring his wife's life. This he carried into effect by taking out policies in two offices for five thousand pounds each.

Six months passed away after these insurances were effected, and Lady Steel had become *enceinte.*

The time for Sir Robert to put in execution the diabolical plan he had formed against her was now come. He only waited his opportunity.

He was already in possession of the weapon, by which she was to fall, namely, strychnine. He had endeavoured, but vainly, to procure it at two chemists' shops in Bishopsgate Street, but a druggist's assistant on Tower Hill sold him some without hesitation.

Circumstances soon favoured his infamy. She had a headache one evening, and they were alone. He suggested sal

volatile, and left the drawing room himself, to procure it for her. He more than half filled a wine glass with water, and then unlocked a drawer, from which he took a small unlabelled bottle, that might have contained the sal volatile, or any other spirit, so far as its appearance was concerned. This bottle, however, contained solution of the strychnine he had purchased on Tower Hill.

He, carefully, and with a steady hand, allowed six drops to fall from the bottle into the wine glass; after which, he recorked and replaced the same in the spot from which he had taken it, and, having locked the drawer, and deposited the key, one of a bunch, in his trousers pocket, he opened a small closet, from a shelf in which he took another bottle labelled "sal volatile," with which, and the wine glass, he returned to the drawing room and his wife.

"Now, my dear," said he, "how many drops will you have?"

"Oh! about a tea-spoonful."

"Forty drops, then," responded her husband; and with a hand somewhat less steady than when he had poured, drop by drop, the strychnine, he measured out the sal volatile into the wine glass.

"There," said he, when the task was done, and he handed her the fluid.

She drank, and took the wine glass from her mouth empty.

"I'll watch the effect of the six drops, and act accordingly with the next;" ejaculated the infamous one within himself.

They sat for nearly an hour in the same room after this, and the wife had showed no symptoms of the poison being at work. After that, however, she complained of her headache being worse, and a feeling of sickness; she also felt chilly, and said,

"Robert dear, I'm afraid that I'm going to be very ill."

To which the individual addressed replied, by asking,

"Why, my dear, what makes you think so?"

"I feel so cold all over, as if I were going to lose the use of my limbs. I cannot tell you how ill I feel."

"Then you had better go to bed, love," observed the other, and I'll bring you something hot. You've taken cold, I can see;" and he looked into her face with a very endearing glance indeed.

She went up to her room, and rang the bell for her maid.

"Dear me, ma'am, how ill you do look!" remarked the latter.

"Yes; my headache is worse, and I feel quite sick and chilly," spoke the lady.

"I'm sorry for that, ma'am, a sick head-

ache is a very bad thing; and you've taken cold as well. What would you like to take, ma'am — a little medicine, and, I think, a footbath? Perhaps a tea-spoonful of sal volatile would do you good."

"No, I think not; I've had some:" and the young wife held down her head in a manner quite pitiable.

In the meantime, the baronet had rinsed the wine glass used for the mixture he administered, and had thrown the slop into the fire; in front of which he afterwards sate, as if watching the expression of the faces that his fancy pictured among the burning embers.

"Forty thousand pounds or the gallows," said he. "I must be very cautious;" but this was spoken in a breath that no one save the man himself could hear.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The disastrous effect of money in the one affair of marriage will be sufficiently appreciated in the solitary instance with which we are now dealing — in the diabolical plotting of Sir Robert Steel.

What other influence is there so corrupting? what propensity so obstinate as the undue love of money? It is the great bane of civilized society; the mighty source of human infelicity.

The base passion has been combated by

philosophy, exposed by satire, condemned by religion; but all in vain. It has yielded neither to argument, ridicule, nor conscience, and it is the one great blot on our civilization.

Is money the *summum bonum* of human existence,—the *Ultima Thule* of human effort? Why should all the fairer attributes of humanity be sacrificed before its remorseless altar, as is the case every moment of our lives? The spectacle is as melancholy as it is degrading; and its vastness is only equalled by its evil results.

And yet, while all this working, fighting, begging, stealing, starving, lying, living, dying, murdering for it exists, there is the solemn question, emblazoned in holy writ, saying, "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

Why, therefore, should all that is sacred

in human affections be made merchandise of, and man so blast his own happiness?

The love of gold is a selfish, slavish passion

"That crowds with crimes the records of mankind."

However, in the present state of society, no one will deny that it is necessary to have a sufficiency of such; money being indispensable in procuring the common wants and comforts of life. Still it is no less certain that the institution of money—the system of pecuniary affairs—is bad, and unworthy of our enlightenment in other respects; for while ten thousand people are starving, and millions are merely vegetating in wretchedness on scanty hard-earned pittances, the one, the capitalist, has far more than would be sufficient to maintain him in the highest affluence; and while such a system of money and society exists it will ever be productive of wide spread

human misery,—ever promote crime and infelicity, and render the world a mere purgatory for the hell-bound multitude.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Lady Steel passed a bad night, but by breakfast time on the following morning she felt much better. The sickness had subsided, the headache had abated, and the spasms, and general muscular contraction, that had more or less been felt during the whole of the long and weary night, were now no longer felt, but there was great prostration of body, and the patient was very nervous.

At her own suggestion, and with the approbation of Sir Robert, his physician was sent for.

The physician came and pronounced her to be labouring under nervous excitement and a bilious attack.

"You've eaten something that has disagreed with you," was the only remark that at all approached the secret of the disorder.

He prescribed a composing draught, and ordered her to remain quiet in bed all day.

The prescription was at once sent to the chemist's; and the draught brought back by the servant was at once taken charge of by Sir Robert. He forthwith repaired to the same room, adjoining his bed-chamber, in which he had poured out the strychnine on the previous evening. He opened the same drawer, and took therefrom the same unlabeled bottle. He then carefully let fall eight drops into an empty tumbler and replaced the phial, and relocked the drawer as before. He then went, tumbler and

phial in hand, into the room where his wife lay.

"Now my love," said he, "your medicine has come;" and in her own presence, and the presence of her maid, he poured the contents of the small medicine bottle into the glass containing the strychnine, and handed it to the patient. She drank, and shivered. In half an hour afterwards, the sickness returned, and the muscular contraction and twitching of the limbs became more violent than before. But this subsided within twenty minutes from the time of attack, and then the patient lay tranquil, although with increased prostration of strength. The paroxysm did not return, notwithstanding which, however, the patient was unable to take food.

In the afternoon, symptoms of a nature affecting her maternal condition set in, and the physician again came.

The baronet chuckled over this new feature in her illness, and in the event of the mishap occurring beyond doubt, (the reader is aware of its nature—the same that the wife of Napoleon De Snag, of Eastbourne Terrace, complained so much about) he thought it would be, perhaps, as well to postpone his operations as a poisoner. So long as she did not give birth to a child the thirty thousand pounds could be made his own at any time, and the only difference her continuing to live would make, with regard to the life assurance, would be the necessity of paying the annual premium for a little while longer.

The doctor prescribed strong astringent remedies on this occasion, and manifested much anxiety as to her probable fate.

And in this condition we will for the present leave her.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Sir Caleb Finch, having now abundant leisure, let loose the flood of thought and feeling that had been long pent up in the deep recesses of his soul. In other words, he unbosomed himself in language, and wrote poetry. He had plenty of money, and nothing to do, but by nature, ardent, restless, and soaring, he could never have settled down in the enjoyment of a purely idle life. Occupation was essential to his happiness, and the pursuit of literature was the kind of employment most con-

genial to his feelings, of any other that suggested itself. Moreover, he had much to say, and he felt it. He had derived impressions from the outer world, wherever his fortune cast him in his journey through life.

His observation had been close, and he had a keen appreciation of the picturesque. The sun and the moon had not shone in vain to him,—the stars had not flickered through the dark canopy of night,—the birds had not carolled in the first blush of the morning,—the trees had not talked in the breeze,—the lightning had not flashed, the thunder had not rolled, the storm had not raged without producing their sublime effect on his imagination. He had watched the glassy ocean in a calm, and when rolling in its grandeur, in a gale, and listened to its roar with more than common feelings; and the waving of the rye, and

the sunlight on the landscape, and the droning of the woods with their soft Æolian song, and the ring-dove's mellow dole trembling faintly on the breeze, were vivid in his memory, and he saw with poet's eye the beautiful in life.

His mind was rich in fancy, and he loved all that is great in nature, all that is grand, magnificent, sublime. He found in loneliness delight; and as the eagle sweeps the vault of heaven, so did his spirit soar in search of beauty.

And why these tastes, so conspicuous in him now, when heretofore he had seemed but a common, grovelling mortal? The answer is simply that the circumstances of his career were of a nature adverse to the development of such. He had been struggling in the unpoetical regions of pecuniary difficulties; his incipient reveries had been disturbed by duns, and the meshes of the

law had continually perplexed him. He had been consequently without any real leisure, and to foster genius leisure is indispensable.

Now the case was totally different; he was unharassed by poverty; everything conspired in his favour—rank and wealth and happiness. His mind had been improved by travel, and his adversity had made him acquainted with many a thing that, had he never quitted the lap of luxury, would have been unknown to him.

He was now a man of experience, and had encountered a sufficient number of mishaps in life to make him distinctly recognise the relations of good and evil, right and wrong; and to make him sympathize with the afflicted and distressed, and altogether impress him with a much truer knowledge of humanity and the world than is possessed by the unadventurous majority

who have never met with such vicissitudes, and who have passed through but few mutations of fortune, or had their moral strength tested in the crucible of necessity.

Sir Caleb Finch wrote a poem; the subject was the shipwreck he had suffered on his way from Rio to England; he also added poems on various subjects; and these he proposed publishing, and sought a publisher accordingly.

However experienced he might have been at the time of writing these effusions, he became considerably more so afterwards, for the first publisher that he sent them to returned them, with the information that he was not disposed to publish any more poetry, unless for those few authors whose former works he had already diffused.

He sent them to another publishing house, with a result equally profitless, save that the firm recommended him to a third

publisher, the excuse being that they did not care about poetry; and this it must be understood notwithstanding his perfect willingness to pay the cost of producing the work.

The third publisher presented a striking contrast to the other two; he was all politeness, all eagerness to furnish an estimate and bring out the work.

The volume appeared, and the amount of the estimate, and more, was paid. The title-page was unpresuming, POEMS BY ZERO being all that thereon appeared, save the name and address of the publisher.

The price of the book was six shillings, and the sum spent in advertizing it was ten pounds. The entire sale, six months after the date of publication, amounted to *one copy*.

Certainly, the author had not made it known to a soul beyond his wife, and the

absence of a *name* on the title-page was against its selling; but, nevertheless, it was a book, and "a book's a book" all the world over; and, at the second-hand book stalls, on the quays of Paris, it is well known that one book is as good as another in the sight of those who there sell them, and that apart from all the merits of authorship, they are sold according to size and condition.

The result of this, his first literary venture, tended somewhat to damp the ardour of the ambitious baronet, and he ordered the "remainders" of his work to be sent down to Plymouth, where his yacht then lay, and on board of which he ordered the box containing the same to be placed. After this, he took an early opportunity of going down to Plymouth, and making a short cruise round the Eddystone lighthouse, during which he availed himself of the

opportunity of throwing the box overboard, and watching it descend into the dark depths below. After this, he was satisfied, and vowed he would write no more poetry. The world had not appreciated him, and the world should never hear of either him or *Zero* again, at any rate as a poet.

And this was the fate of the first creations of his muse,—of the poems upon which he had bestowed months of thought, and labour, and which he had flattered himself, would be *read*, and set everybody asking who "*Zero*" was.

It was the man's vanity that induced him to hold back his own name. He said to himself, "I'll let the work rest entirely upon its own merit."

And the work had merit, and was tolerably well reviewed, and would have afforded very good reading for the readers of poetry. Unfortunately, however, the

latter are, compared with the lovers of prose, very few indeed, and even those few have plenty of books of the kind thrust prominently before them, in the form of reprints of authors of the last and previous generations, and of Tennyson, Bulwer Lytton, Baily, Reade, Browning, Longfellow, and half a dozen eminent living poets beside, without having recourse at all to the mass of ephemeral poems that are constantly issuing from the press.

Consequently, the followers of Caleb Finch have, in the majority of instances, found their labours equally unappreciated, and the publication of their works the most profitless act of their lives.

Would that those who are so anxious to rush into print knew how difficult a thing it is to acquire literary fame, and how empty a thing that fame is even when gained. It is at the best a bubble. There

is, in this country, no more thankless office than that of the author, particularly the writer of imaginative works. A man may toil himself into a premature grave without perhaps reaping the slightest reward of any kind. There is no badge of distinction awarded to him by the state, however great the good that may have resulted from his labours, and in this respect we are singularly behind other European nations.

A few popular authors may reap considerable pecuniary benefit from their literary exertions, but that, and likely much more, might have been obtained in other walks of life, without a single contribution to the intelligence of the age—the enlightenment of their fellow men. Traffickers in dry goods and hardware may buy and sell, and meet with quite as good a reward as that usually bestowed upon genius in England.

Although, as we have said, the ardour of the poet had considerably abated, the desire of the novelist took its place, and Caleb Finch wrote, within three months from the time of the overthrow of the box, a novel, which was published in two volumes, under the title of *Mark Wilmot*, on the same terms as his poetry, and by the same firm. It appeared anonymously, and fifteen pounds were expended in advertising it, the result, after six months from the date of publication, being a sale of eight copies, and this although it was well reviewed in some of the leading journals.

The baronet author's brow darkened at this want of success, and he began to feel himself an ill used man. But still he hoped for better things. "I'll publish my travels," said he; and again, with a buoyant heart and a firm purpose, he took up the pen.

The title of the work was *A Visit to Brazil.*

Within two months from the date of its commencement it was in the printer's hands, and within another month it was published in one volume, price 10*s.* 6*d.*, *by the Author of* "*Mark Wilmot.*"

This work was reviewed badly; one critic said the author didn't know how to write, and then, that it was just what any one might have written without ever having been either at sea or at Rio, and throwing out a back-handed hint that the writer had neither seen Rio, nor yet been shipwrecked in his life.

The sale of this book, although amounting to fifty copies, was not such as to induce him to continue writing. His vanity was anything but flattered by the reception he had met with both from the critics and the public; and he felt considerably mortified at so barren a result attending his difficult struggle along the path to fame. However,

he consoled himself with Gray's well known line—

"The paths of glory lead but to the grave;"

and felt that after all fame was not worth toiling and battling for, and that private life offered far more real happiness than the publicity attendant on popular authorship. And so far he was comforted.

It would have been well had he rested satisfied with himself at this juncture, but the feeling of disappointment consequent upon being beaten, or rather foiled, in his attempt at gaining popularity by means of his pen, irritated him a little, and made him yearn for conquest, and more eager for publicity and laurels than he had ever been before. He thought of Sir Walter Scott, and also the eminent lights of the literary world of his own day; and said to himself, "These men have been successful, why

cannot I?" and more desperate than ever he again took up the pen, and racked his brain in search of novelties.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"I WANT a theme," said Byron, and said Finch; and, many an hour of active wandering thought, had the latter before he found one. "I will forsake real life," he then said; "I have a copious fancy. I take delight in all the hues of heaven, and they impart to me a something of their semblance. I have imagination, and a mind stored with ideal beauties—rich in its own creations;" after which soliloquy, he took up his pen, and wrote:—

Impatient as the wind, my spirit yearns
For summer lands where sunny women smile;

My blood flows madly, and my passion burns
For scenes voluptuous, that the days beguile
In tropic regions, where the balmy air
Is filled with fragrance, and the living earth
Is rife with riches. There, O beauty! there
I'd live, I'd die; yea, reinherit birth.
There is a pleasure in the boundless void
Of thought and feeling; there is rhapsody
In contemplating beauty in its pride;
And, oh, my soul, there is angelic glee
In building up ideal worlds of thought,
Through and o'er which in fancy we may fly,
Spurning the dust we tread as though 'twere nought,
Forgetting earth in more empyrean joy.

Give me imagination—let me love;
Then shall I soar in thrice transcendent flight,
Pluck out the stars in fancy, and awake
In worlds of grandeur and eternal light.
There in those climes, unearth-like—high above,
Would I for the ideal—my soul's sake,
Wing on my way through countless ages long,
Find fire in lightnings, and in thunders song.

"I have pursued fame along the beaten track; but for me her trumpet has never sounded. I will now diverge from the path of all others. I will do something

that has never been done before. I will go beyond the dominions of civilised mankind." Again he wrote :—

Fierce as the whirlwind, furious as the gale,
My spirit wanders to where sea birds wail
On rugged cliffs and rocky isles unknown,
Far o'er the seas unpeopled and alone.
Wild as the storm and vast as earth and sky,
Thought flies on thought, ascending far and high,
Bearing me on to regions where the sun
Smiles over desert plains, where panthers run,
And mountain peaks, stern, barren, bold, and bare,
Rest dark and grim beneath his sultry glare.

"Here would I take delight in nature's wildness, far from the pomp conventional, I see gathered around me. Yes, I say"—

Give me a free, wild, boundless solitude,
With panthers for companions and food,
Where lions and hyenas prowl awide,
And stealthy tigers spring and leopards hide,
For I would rule them with an eye of fire,
And tame them with the music of my lyre.

Give me the quick Red Indian's thrilling whoop,
The hungry vulture's swift, unerring swoop.
These are the things I love to hear and see—

But better still, to be alone and free
On some wild cragland, where the ocean's roar
Blends up with wind-mouth'd caverns, and the shore
Is desolate of man, there would I dwell,
And build my home deep in some covert dell.

"But, instead of doing these things in reality, I will do them in imagination. I will suppose myself another *Robinson Crusoe*, and write accordingly. I will entitle my work *The Undiscovered Land.* If that is successful, or even if my own expectation with regard to it is realized, I will imagine another "*Utopia*," and show mankind what their system of society and laws *ought to be;* and, after that, I will continue, and complete my grand work entitled *An Imaginary World*,—a pure creation, in strict keeping with the motto to appear on the title-page, namely, *I'll invent a world and people it.* And, after all these things are done, I will repose on my laurels, or remain, what I am, an obscure

baronet, just as circumstances may lead to the one or the other."

And with these resolves to put in execution, we will for the present leave him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A FEW weeks only ulterior to the period embraced in the last chapter, the attention of our aspirant for literary fame was diverted by the birth of a baby in his wife's bedroom.

Louisa,—Lady Steel, had become the mother of a second child—a daughter.

This was an event that warmed and gladdened the heart of *Zero*, and made him think more of home than of either *the unknown land*, or the new *Utopia*, or even the *imaginary world*, to the building up of

which his mind had been so much, and was still devoted.

There was something tangible about a baby which there was not about any one of the three things just mentioned. The creations of his brain were, therefore, cast into the shade for a moment, by this joint-partnership creation corporeal in matrimony, and he turned from the black letter child of his fancy, to contemplate the small pink one which his wife had just presented to himself and the world. Sir Caleb Finch walked into the presence of his wife with all the composure of a stoic, and all the humanity of a father, for the first time after the great event of the day.

"How frail a thing is man!" (he should have said *woman*) was his soliloquy on observing the child in the arms of a nurse (*monthly* by description) as he entered the apartment.

"Dear me!" said the philosopher-father after the lapse of a few moments, during which he had stood at the bedside of the mother. "How very small it is!"

"It's a very fine child, sir," spoke the nurse.

"Ah!" said the baronet; "and what exceedingly fine hair!" alluding to the delicate, silky material that thinly covered a very small head, the general pink of which it was not sufficient to conceal.

"And this is the human form divine," soliloquized the father within himself. "Helpless indeed!"

The child was baptized in the name of Victoria; and, with the assistance of a nurse (by description *wet*), its little body flourished like a green tree. And the young brother, the son and heir of the house of Finch, who had been ushered to life in Oxford Terrace, and cradled in dis-

tress, was glad that he had now a sister, and delighted at the novelty of the event, which to him was something quite inexplicable. He wanted to know where it came from; and he was told a bed of roses and a bandbox alternately.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

This is a world in which births and marriages and deaths make the social sphere revolve, and constitute the leading events of life. And what joy and woe, what felicity and misery, do they not daily spread awide, from the alpha to the heyday, and the heyday to the omega, of our existence! How often our birth is the first signal of distress,—our marriage the symbol of inunity,—and death the premature decay of an over-worked frame!

We but recently left the wife of Finch

the mother of a new-born babe, and now we have to announce her death. The cause of such was cancer in the breast; and the melancholy event took place seven months after the birth of the daughter to whom we have referred. The bereaved husband was plunged into sadness and grief by the loss of this the sultana of his existence.

"She has gone to the realms of bliss, too good in the world to stay. She has left me alone in the world.

> "My heart is a desolate waste,
> No pleasure or joy can I taste."

Such was his mournful soliloquy.

Often he ejaculated—

> Oh! that I could soar to thee, for I dread in the world to stay;

or some such words. He never wept, but his sorrow was profound.

For days after her funeral, he was unable to take up his pen and write; and

when he did, it was only to dwell upon the same melancholy theme. Thus—

Beneath the frown of the grey steeple lies
Her silent grave; there, oft as evening dies,
There, oft as droning woods their drowsy song
Cease to attune; there, as the insect throng,
Drunk with the summer nectar, dart and dance,
In mazy play, while herds, with eye askance,
Moan lazily, and while through rustling trees
The ring-doves' dole swells trembling in the breeze;
There, oft in thought, I ling'ring love to strew
Her grave with blossoms; there a sober yew
Doth cast a sombre sanctity of shade
O'er the green mound beneath which she was laid.

I weep not! no, why should I shed a tear
For her, the fond one, who, still dear,
Has vanished into darkness like a star?
Which, though unseen, still lives in realms afar.
'Twere fit for sinless angels there to shed,
From heavenly eyes, sad tears o'er her head;
For me 'twould be unmanful mourning, yea,
A waste of strength on sorrow, night on day.

Again he gave vent to his saddened feelings—

Yes, she has vanished, flitted from my gaze,
And I am left alone to pass my days

Bereft of love and beauty save in thought,
Save the soul picture that is in me wrought!
But not in England shall I linger now;
The ocean and the desert woo me wide,
And fortune's gale bids fair to waft my prow
To shores remote where, decked in tropic pride,
The perfumed hills look glad—the valleys groan
With living treasures. Give me ocean's moan,
Let me go forth and journey o'er its main;
Then range the woods and wander o'er the plain,
For my heart throbs within me, and my soul
Is wild with frenzy—thoughts revolving roll,
Impelling me to death,—a distant land
Or many a thing more terrible and grand
Which language fails to tell; for fierce and high
The billows of my intellect contend
One with the other 'neath the blackened sky
Of retrospection gloomy—lightnings rend
My brain to madness—I am sorrow's child,
And all within's a wilderness—a wild.

Dark as the shadows of the rolling moon,
Or as the cloud that beareth on the squall,
My thoughts revolve in day devoid of noon.
My soul is gloomy; visions dire appal,
And as a sea contending with the storm
My feelings heave in fitful throbbing waves,
While fevered fancy in each pictured form,
Sees ghastly features, and my passion raves
In heedless fury. Wherefore do I live?

* * * * * *

After a while, however, Sir Caleb Finch recovered from the brooding melancholy which had pervaded his mind, in consequence of his bereavement, and settled down for life a disconsolate widower.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The family prospects of Lady Steel were blighted, but, owing to the judicious treatment of her doctor, and the present abandonment of the baronet's intention to poison her, she recovered, and lived on in ignorance of the diabolical act that had imperiled her life.

Years elapsed after this, during which, Sir Robert Steel and his wife lived, to all appearances, happily together.

No second attempt had been made on her life, neither was she yet a mother.

It was the year eighteen hundred and fifty-eight.

Only a few doors from Sir Caleb Finch, in Portman Square, resided the second baron,—Lord Seapark. The two men had estates also adjoining each other, in Dorsetshire, and, owing to the circumstance of their having met at the house of the Duke of Devon, a short time prior to the marriage of Seapark with the second daughter of the latter nobleman, an acquaintance subsisted between them, and they soon became on terms of intimate friendship. There was something congenial in spirit between them, perhaps from the somewhat cosmopolitan education they had each in their turn received. They had both been abroad, buffeting with the world; and, although the one had never been in Brazil, nor the other in California, still they were able to reciprocate ideas on the

subject of foreign travel; and the mere circumstance of their having passed through scenes of a somewhat similar nature, had induced a tone of mind, thought, and opinion which was peculiar to both. And, although the trials they had suffered, and the adventures they had passed through, were never told in the fulness of their truth, still they agreed on so many points, that their friendship was more closely and quickly cemented in consequence, than, in all probability, it would ever have been under the ordinary circumstances of every-day life.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It was in London, and the month of June, in the year last named, and three months after the marriage of Lord Seapark.

The day was a rainy one, and windy, which gave a rawness and unpleasant dampness to the air, quite unusual in the month of June, even in England.

It was past noon, in the mansion of the nobleman just alluded to. The latter was at his club, and Lady Seapark sat alone in her drawing room writing, and in which, owing to the state of the weather, she had been induced to have a fire lighted.

She had been in the room about half an hour, and had just finished one of her epistles, when she rose and stood in front of the fire to peruse it. She wore a flounced dress of very light muslin texture, but, according to the prevailing fashion, of great and excessive circumference.

Now, it unfortunately occurred, that after rising from her seat, the lower part of her dress had not entirely fallen, but projected, in pleasant disorder, as light materials of the kind, under the influence of starch and an irregular crush sometimes will; and that the said projecting portion was, owing to the vicinity of its wearer to the fire, brought into such close contact with the flames, that it became ignited; and, like a breath of smoke, the conflagration burst over the entire figure of the helpless woman.

She uttered a wild, shrill, affrighted

scream, and flew breathless to the door. But here her presence of mind entirely failed her, and she leapt into the air with a convulsive throb of agony, and fell senseless to the floor. And there she lay for nearly twenty minutes, till the arrival of one of the servants.

She was not dead, but unconscious, and so severely burnt, that death was inevitable. The cinders of her clothing fell away as the footmen lifted her, and endeavoured to place her on a sofa, and she died within two hours from the time of her dress igniting.

Great was the dismay of Lord Seapark, on his return home, a few minutes after she had expired—extreme was his agony of mind. But there was no help for him now. Death had obtained the victory, and the husband and wife were torn asunder for ever.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Sir Caleb Finch was a man who preached republicanism and acted the tory; who exalted the virtues of aboriginal life, and practised all the manners of the most refined civilisation; who advocated equality by saying that one man was as good as another, and yet prided himself upon his superior manners, education, talents, rank, and fortune; who had a great contempt for the coarse and the vulgar, the profane, the sordid-souled, the parsimonious, and the uncharitable, and who thought it hard

to believe that any of the unintellectual were destined for immortality or had a resurrection in store for them. He practised religion out of respect for popular observances; yet he did not believe in heaven or hell—of a future state for man. He thought, with Byron, that "men are but maggots of some huge earth's burial;" and he esteemed it very vain and presumptuous in man, to expect so much to be made of him hereafter. He believed that undue importance was attached to the bible, and he sided with the Jews regarding Christ. He was an Unitarian by creed. He looked upon the children of men as so many animals, and nothing more. He looked upon himself as far superior to the common herd of such, but he looked forward to no future beyond the grave. He said:—"If I express my opinion and sincere belief, society will damn me, be-

cause human vanity prompts the recognition of the assertions of the church, and the chnrch is supported by the state, and it is to the interest of the state to support the church, for the sake of holding together the constitution, and promoting law and order. But it is all a human—a social institution, and we are an universally deluded people. None of us know of anything beyond the world we inhabit: I expect nothing beyond it. I only know that we are a vicious perverted race of bipeds, calling ourselves civilised, and Christians, Jews, Hindoos, or by the name of whatever other sect we may belong to. It is very well for poets to paint paradise and the infernal regions—Dante-like, but to rely upon anything so purely visionary, is a delusion and a snare. It is simply egotism of the most foolish kind."

"We are creatures of corruption, and

nothing more; and when once dead, we are everlastingly so. It may be said that our intelligence teaches us otherwise, but it does no such thing; the dog has intelligence, so has the fox, the horse, the monkey, and ten thousand other animals, in proportion to ourselves. We are simply the most superior animals in the world. The world was created, according to the *atomic theory*, by atom joining atom, after floating about at random in the realms of space for thousands of years. The world was peopled in exactly the same manner, that it was furnished with other animals, and insects; and as the waters were with fish, and that by mere natural agency over which no individual God, in our sense of the word, presides. This feeling lies unexpressed in tens of thousands of breasts; but the people are afraid to speak anything so unorthodox, and hundreds of years will

likely elapse before there is sufficient freedom of opinion allowed to enable men to speak what they think on this matter. Even the priesthood of the earth prefer the certain joys of this world to the uncertain ones of the hereafter, and all religion, from pew-rent up, is conducted on a selfish principle for a purely worldly end."

"It is for worldly gain that a preacher tries to make himself popular. He has a wife or a bishopric in view, and of course his profession demands of him the support of his religion; and religion, as practised with regard to eternity, is a mockery, and a delusion, and a snare." So soliloquised Sir Caleb Finch.

"Alas! misguided man," the world will say. And the world will speak truly; for our author was a backslider in heart against the living faith, and he laughed at all those conventional forms of society that he considered hollow.

But although we may differ with, and condemn the man after this knowledge of his beliefs, we must not be so ungenerous as to do other than allow him to go to hell in his own way. We know better than all this, and our faith is sufficient to carry us through victorious. He will meet with his reward hereafter, we may be sure.

In learning the opinions of this man, who, by education, talents, and pursuits, ought to have been capable of saying something above the vulgar level of every-day talk, we have done no injury to ourselves. Indeed, our own faith ought to be strengthened in consequence. It ought to convince us of the spuriousness of his belief, and the infallibility of our own, and by so doing increase our confidence in the truths embodied in the sacred writings of the bible.

Having given this additional insight into the character of Sir Caleb Finch, we will for the present leave him.

CHAPTER XL.

It was one day, in the month of November, in the same year of fifty-eight, and Sir Robert Steel was on the eve of again attempting the destruction of his wife's life, when Lady Steel, who had left home alone in the early part of the afternoon, failed in returning as usual to dinner.

"It's very strange that she's not here," observed the baronet, looking at his watch, then pointing to the hour of eight,—"very strange indeed!" However, he sat down, and ate his dinner alone.

At that moment, Lady Steel and Lord Seapark were stepping on board the Calais steamer at Dover.

The mere announcement of this event is sufficient to convey to the mind of the reader the nature of the cause occasioning her absence, and of the feelings existing between herself and the young widower. Fortunately, Lady Steel was a good sailor, and they had a smooth passage. The former was delighted at thus breaking away from the presence and control of a man whom she had never loved; the other was glad and jubilant in the possession of the woman he yearned for, however wrongfully. And thus, without any conscientious scruples, or care for the happiness of the baronet husband of Eaton Square, the two sought solace in each other, and in heart made merry.

CHAPTER XLI.

On the morning following the elopement, Sir Robert Steel received a letter bearing the Dover post-mark. It was from his wife,—the fugitive, and ran thus:—

"I know that I have done you a deep wrong. But it is now too late for me to repair it. I shall not attempt to justify the act that must result in our lasting separation. I shall, in a few hours, leave England with another. I will pray for your happiness; but I could never have loved you.

"Adieu, for ever, and forgive me,

"Mabel."

"Well, this is a pretty how-do-you-do. Quite equal to what I expected," observed the baronet; and in his wrath he crushed the letter in his hand, and flung it to the ground.

He had lost all chance of acquiring the legacy of thirty thousand pounds, for which he had plotted against her life, and his only redress lay in suing the adulterer for damages, and by means of the Divorce Court obtaining his liberty to marry again.

Not to marry for love, however, but money. He knew several rich widows, and so he comforted himself under his sense of wrong and injured pride. He had a strong suspicion as to who was the adulterer, and he drove immediately after breakfast to the mansion of Lord Seapark, and received the information that the nobleman in question had left on the

previous day for Paris. From thence he took his way to the house of Sir Caleb Finch, and informed him of the painful facts.

As might be expected, the latter was as much startled as he felt grieved by the intelligence.

"However, what is done cannot be undone;" remarked the injured husband. "I have no remedy now, save in the Divorce Court;" and he took his departure, looking very sad and disappointed.

He called at the houses of several of his friends in the course of the day, and informed them of the domestic calamity that had befallen him. Among these was the Duchess of Yarborough, who had become a widow three years before, and she sympathized with him very deeply indeed.

Sir Robert Steel felt his pride wounded more than he had ever done before, and he

determined to make the man who had been the acting cause of it *pay*, and he instructed his lawyer to proceed in the matter with all possible dispatch.

CHAPTER XLII.

It was past noon on New Year's Day, in 1859, at Paris. The city wore its gayest aspect. The streets were crowded, and the traffic was peculiar to the day; it's like had not been seen since the *jour de l'an*, exactly a year before.

Every one was making holiday, but shopmen and shopwomen, and all the rest were making slaves of these.

All the way from the Madeline to the Château d'Eau, crowds of well dressed people filled the foot walks on either side of the road over a distance of four miles.

The air was clear, but cold, dry and bracing, and neither snow nor slop encumbered the ground.

The arcades were crammed with human heads, so were the Boulevards.

Everybody was buying up the glittering treasures that were displayed in the shop windows. A mania for buying and selling seemed to have suddenly taken possession of all Paris. Every shop was a fancy fair, nobody seemed able to resist their attractions—their seductive influence—their many allurements.

Line after line of temporary shops—stalls of rough boards, and uncouth look—were erected along the main boulevards and the chief thoroughfares, and these vied with the brick and stone shops in the pleasing variety and appearance of their wares, notwithstanding their inferiority of quality and the consequent lowness of price at

which they were sold. Everything both useful and ornamental, from a telescope to a cravat, and a pair of stag's horns to a box of sweetmeats, was here displayed. There was the head of the Emperor in plaster, and the head of the Empress in plaster, and there were cherubs to match. There were some good looking fire-irons, and an assemblage of thermometers, all faithfully pointing to 56°; there were imitation ivory-backed hair brushes, bristling in front of some sham jewelry; there were toys that promised much amusement to many of the rising generation; and artificial flowers to adorn beauty; and pocket-handkerchiefs, of a much more durable kind than those used in Japan; and pots and pans that were likely to bring about many a stew; and pictures by any but the old masters, although one looked Titianesque; and stereoscopes, of one of which an Irishman

once remarked, "*Shure enough it rolls the two into one;*" and purses—about the last things one would have thought that the Parisians could have wanted to day, for they were each and all getting rid of their money with a persevering alacrity little less than amazing.

And why all this unusual bustle and life, and prodigality to day? Why all these maimed and halt; these wearers of wretched looks and tattered garments? Why this festivity—this exhibition of all the fashion and gaiety, all the workmanship and wealth, and all the cripples and poverty of this beautiful city of beautiful France? Why such crowds of smiling faces and perambulating feet?

To answer is easy. People were buying presents—*étrennes*, as they are called, to give away to their mothers and fathers, and sisters and brothers, to their wives and daughters, and sons and cousins, and nieces,

and sweethearts, and uncles and aunts, and friends and acquaintances.

Those not on sufficiently intimate terms to make presents to each other sent their cards by the postman, or still better, called and left them in person, taking care to turn down one end in signification of such. As a consequence, the postmen were being as heavily worked as the shopmen to day.

A public reception was going forward at the Tuileries; a private one was taking place in every house. Men and women, whom circumstances had estranged or otherwise kept apart since the *jour de l'an* of the previous year, were all gathering together, and exchanging the warm embrace and loving words.

Multitudes were being besieged on all sides for new year's gifts. Every man of the upper million found himself politely assailed by his *auvergnat*, his *charbonnier*,

and his *blanchisseuse*, the *concierge*, the postman, the newspaper man, the butcher's boy, the baker's boy, the grocer's boy, and his own servant.

No place of refuge was to be found from the quiet demands of these smiling banditti of the *jour de l'an*.

Every *garçon* in every restaurant levied a tax upon the generosity of all who came to refresh their weary bodies, and liberal were these fellows with their smiles and proffered oranges, and by no means behind in their expectations of five franc pieces in return.

Every *garçon* in every café was as lavish in the dispensation of smiles and cigars tied up with ribbon, as were his brethren of the restaurants with their smiles and oranges; and his expectations were just as high. All the beggars in Paris were let loose, and there was no escaping them.

It was while the city was throbbing under

all this peaceful excitement that Sir Caleb Finch might have been seen moving slowly with the gay crowd—the long stream of busy human life—down the Boulevards, in the direction of the Rue de Rivoli and the Hôtel Meurice, where he was then staying. He reached his destination, and was in the act of ascending one of the staircases to his rooms, when, on nearing the second floor, a woman's shriek broke wildly through the air. He sprang forward, and the next moment was within view of a well-dressed female that, with a dagger plunged deep into her breast, fell dead to the ground before him, and in front of the open door of a suite of apartments. Another glance revealed to his horrified gaze the prostrate body of a man, also well dressed, on the point of expiring, with a woman (his wife) in an agony of grief weeping over, and endeavouring to raise him up. He had

just fallen at the point of that same dagger that now pierced the heart of the woman. Reader, that man was CHARLES LUCIEN DE BURGH WINTERTHORNE; and that murderess was his quasi-wife of Hambro', the daughter of Napoleon de Snag, of Eastbourne Terrace.

She had tracked him out, and revenged herself unto death, for the wrongs he had done her; and, knowing the penalty of her crime, she had added suicide to homicide. Only a few moments before the occurrence of the tragedy, she had entered the hotel named, where she had previously ascertained that Winterthorne was staying, together with his wife, but whom she supposed to be merely his mistress; and, taking her way to the door of his rooms (with whose number she had been made acquainted), she pulled a small bell, and, grasping a naked and concealed dagger in her right

hand, awaited an answer to the summons. Winterthorne himself appeared; when, without a word or a sign, she at the instant sprang upon him with the ferocity of a tigress, and plunged the weapon deep into his heart.

Here was a scene that contrasted wofully with the gaiety of the city and the day, and which tended very much to appal the sensitive Sir Caleb Finch; for he was a man of deep and tender feeling, and he mourned ruefully the fate of the murdered man's widow, and sympathized with her from his soul, as there, in the wildness of her frenzy and distress, she appealed to heaven for relief, and fell, in a deep swoon, over the body of her dead husband.

CHAPTER XLIII.

It is the seventeenth of June, the year is eighteen hundred and fifty-nine. Sir Robert Steel has this day allied himself in matrimony with the widow Duchess of Yarborough, at St. George's, Hanover Square, he having a few days previously obtained his divorce from Mabel, daughter of Sir Montagu Finch; previous to which his lawyer had received, through Lord Seapark's solicitor, a sum of five thousand pounds, in settlement of the action commenced against him for adultery.

Mabel, the divorced, is now the wife of Lord Seapark, they having exchanged the marriage vows on the second day following her legal emancipation.

Sir Caleb Finch has recovered from the shock of the Paris tragedy, and having returned to London, is plying his goose-quill with astonishing rapidity, and results little less than wonderful. Figuratively speaking, he entertains but little doubt that the effect of his next publication will be to set the Thames on fire. He is still a disconsolate widower, but is resolved never to marry again; and he condemns the indelicacy of feeling, and want of refinement, which induces people, under similar circumstances to his own, to reenter the married state. He esteems his sister particularly coarse in this respect, and only surpassed in her impropriety by Lord Seapark. However, there is no estrangement of the parties; for the

baronet is on most points as liberal in his judgment and opinions, notwithstanding his own fastidiousness in some things, and his singularities in others, as formerly he was rash and reckless.

It is not for the author of this work to say more concerning the wreck and ruin, the fashions and bubbles, and the ups and downs of life, which he has thus far depicted.

He has written in the knowledge that there is more sorrow and misery than joy and happiness, — more vice and uncharitableness, than virtue and generosity,—more love of mammon than of merit, actuating mankind, and that a picture of life, to be true, must abound in the shadows as well as the lights of our civilization. He has therefore mingled the sombre and the gay, and sought out his characters in the world

rather than his imagination, and written in accordance with the principles that "knowledge is power," that "to be forewarned is to be forearmed," and that a true chart, however many rocks and shoals it may denote, is safer and better for the navigator to learn from than a false one, however flattering to the eye.

He has exhibited human nature under various aspects, and he has done so as much for the instruction as the amusement of his readers, and in the firm belief, that the more we know of mankind and the world, the more amelioration is to be looked for, the more righteous are we likely to become.

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"The author's account of those cities and towns of Japan which he saw is necessarily brief, consequent on the shortness of his stay in the American frigate which visited the islands on its way to Kamschatka. This is to be regretted, since his keen sense of observation, if he had visited the interior, would have afforded him an opportunity of displaying that ability to its utmost extent. But that which is to a certain extent limited, from no fault of the author's, is amply redeemed by his introducing his readers to the society of a Japanese of distinction—Noskotoska by name. The interview which took place between these two gentlemen must have been of the most curious and interesting character. On the one hand was the travelled, educated Englishman, who had seen a greater part of the world; on the other was the stay-at-home, intelligent Japanese, who had never been out of sight of his sea-girt home. The one could not address the other with fluency in English, nor could the other express his thoughts sufficiently powerful in Japanese; both, therefore, had resort to Dutch, a language perfectly known to either of them, and yet they conversed on subjects that must have been of a most entertaining character to both. This gentleman's library was found to contain a large number of Japanese books, a few in Dutch, and two or three in English, including a dictionary. A good insight was here obtained into the domestic habits of this singular people, and Mr. Cornwallis made excellent use of his time and pen. The courtesy shown to him on all occasions, both by the host and his wife, must have been polite in the extreme; and yet not to such an excess as to create a sense of weariness in the visitor's mind. He found the gardens, as they are all in Japan, in the highest state of cultivation; laid out

with great taste and judgment, and having the appearance of a beautiful landscape in miniature. In-doors, order, regularity, and comfort reigned supreme. All the appurtenances befitted the house of a gentleman of rank: the sitting-rooms were elegantly furnished in the Japanese style, the porcelain and lacquerware of the choicest description; and when on one occasion he happened to find his host entertaining a party of ladies and gentlemen, and music was introduced after dinner, he found that, instead of the unmeaning jumble of discordant sounds which in other foreign lands grate on the ear of the musician, the ladies were adepts at the art, and accompanied their soft melodious voices with instruments of a strange device, yet harmonious withal. All that the author relates in this work is written in glowing language, that sometimes raises itself into the realms of poetry. He is a great admirer of nature in her primitive and uncultivated state, nor does he confine his admiration to things inanimate; he loves these unsophisticated children of the sunny isles of the Pacific, he envies them in their happy state of ignorance, and delights to see them pure and untainted by the artificial wants of civilised society.

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on this important question; but we cannot leave it without a word or two. We are about to come in more immediate contact with this isolated nation. Our gigantic strides in commerce, and facilities of communication, will naturally create a spirit of inquiry amongst them. In all probability Europeans will reside in all the ports about to be opened by the new treaties. We shall introduce to a people, who are, by all accounts, patterns of morality and virtue, our vaunted civilisation; the residents will be free to attend their own places of worship, our social manners and customs will be made apparent, and they will not fail to observe that our religion is powerless to restrain the vices of those who are regardless of their spiritual welfare. Can we then venture to hope that Christianity will find any favour with them, when they see its professors indulging in sensualities from which they themselves turn away in disgust? They will, perhaps, be told that there are amongst Christians good and virtuous men and women, who mourn over the degradations of their country; but we must not be surprised if they point to their own uncontaminated state of society, and prefer it to ours.

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